

FILM
THREAT™

MORE PAGES!

VIDEO GUIDE

Summer 1991

Issue 3

\$3.95 U.S.

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£4.00 U.K.



TONS
of
Video
Reviews!

Jet Benny
Rome '78
Bad Films
Runman 69
Arrive Alive
Necromania
No Subtlety
Brains on Film
Mutant Massacre
King Kong 1990
Steps From Hell
Baby On Parade
Return of the King
12 O'Clock High II
No Skin Off My Ass
The Dead Next Door
Hot Buttered Kung Fu
love, drugs & violence
Confessions of a Southern Punk

NEKROMANTIK
DIRECTOR

JORG BUTTGEREIT—

YES, THERE IS
SEX
AFTER DEATH!

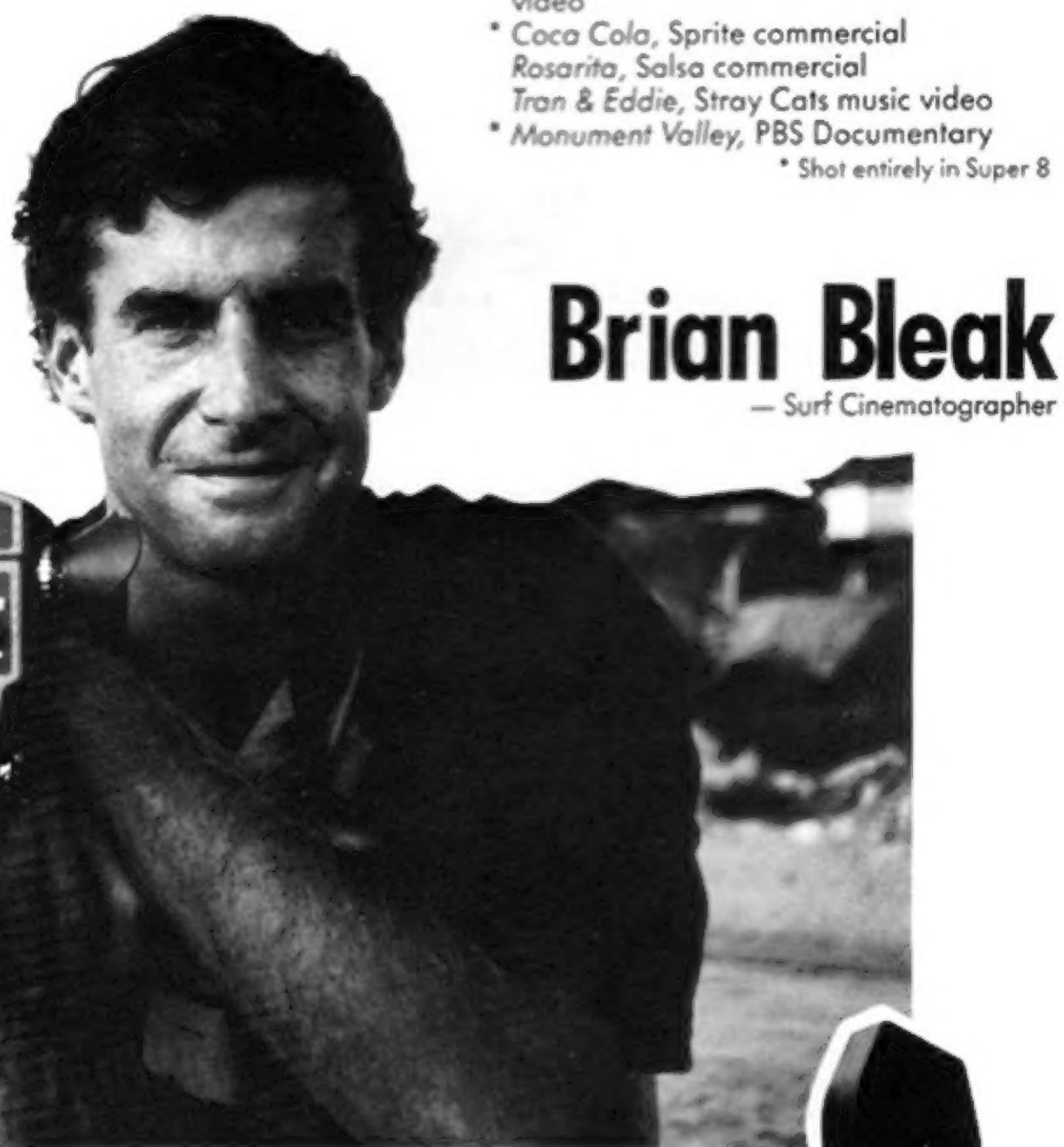
MARSHALL

LOOK WHO'S SHOOTING SUPER 8

- * Straight Up, Paula Abdul music video
- * Forever Your Girl, Paula Abdul music video
- Space Shuttle footage, NASA
- * Revolution, Nike, commercial
- America's Most Wanted, FOX
- Black Rain, Paramount Pictures, feature film
- Jovan Musk, Commercial, Clio winner
- Imagine, John Lennon feature
- Dear America: Letters Home from Vietnam, HBO
- This is Elvis, feature
- Flatliners, Columbia Pictures, feature film
- 21 Jump Street, FOX
- Notorious, Duran Duran music video
- James Taylor, music video
- * A Polish Vampire in Burbank, feature film on USA network
- McDonald's, commercial
- Burger King, commercial
- With or Without You, U-2 music video
- Surf detergent, commercial
- Let the Music Do the Talking, Aerosmith music video
- Howie Mandel Special, HBO
- * Lunchmeat, feature film
- * The Jet Benny Show, feature film
- * Curse of the Queerwolf, feature film
- * Wave Warriors, II, III, IV, V, feature films

- * Journey to the Impact Zone, feature film
- * San Clemente Locals, feature film
- * Game of Survival, feature film
- * Doctor Strain, The Body Snatcher, feature film
- The Outsiders, FOX
- * Ozone Attack of the Red Neck Mutants, feature film
- * Desperate Teenage Love Dolls, feature film
- * Chobe, Documentary
- * Attack of the B Movie Monsters, feature film
- * Gore-met Zombie Chef From Hell, feature film

- Wildcats, feature film
 - Bad Medicine, Bon Jovi music video
 - * Dreamin, George Benson music video
 - Higher Love, Steve Windwood music video
 - No More Lies, Moody Blues music video
 - Tunnel of Love, Bruce Springsteen music video
 - REM, concert video
 - * In the Name of the People, Academy Award Nominee for Best Documentary 1984
 - Someday, Steve Earl music video
 - Coming Around Again, Carly Simon music video
 - Good Music, Joan Jett music video
 - Don't Disturb Groove, The System music video
 - * Coca Cola, Sprite commercial
 - Rosarita, Salsa commercial
 - Tran & Eddie, Stray Cats music video
 - * Monument Valley, PBS Documentary
- * Shot entirely in Super 8



On Super 8:

We're starting on our fifth one now — sort of like the *Nightmare on Elm Street* of surfing.

I really think the reason why I'm sticking with Super 8 is that I see the potential of the medium. It's so much easier than shooting with say 16mm — and it's a lot less expensive. Kodachrome 40 is a tight grain film. On tape, it's really beautiful.

I own my own equipment. I can grab my Pelican case with three cameras in it and hump down the beach and be set up and shooting in two minutes while the other guys are still fumbling with their clunky rigs. I really believe that filmmaking should be fun. And if you're not having fun, forget it. With a camera like the Beaulieu 7008, film to video on the Rank Cintel, and the beauty of Kodachrome, Super 8 will blow you away."

Brian Bleak is head of production for Astroboys Productions. He has produced nine Super 8 surf films during the past five years. Mr. Bleak is a major contributor to "Surfer Magazine" on ESPN.

"I try to shoot the best surfers in the world in the best conditions. That's basically the format for *Wave Warriors*.



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Super 8 Sound:
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Annoy editor David E. Williams, order
FILM THREAT videos and generally
complain about FILM THREAT VIDEO
GUIDE.

Published quarterly, FTVG is interested in
underground videos, direct to video
releases and highly unusual films.



THE OTHER MOVIE MAGAZINE

9171 Wilshire Blvd. Ste. 300
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

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Ruin editor Christian Gore's day by
bitching about the new, glossy and
nationally distributed FILM THREAT
MAGAZINE.

Now bi-monthly, FILM THREAT MAGAZINE
is interested in feature-length, theatrically
released films and unusual movie culture.

**TWO DIFFERENT MAGAZINES,
TWO DIFFERENT ADDRESSES,
TWO DIFFERENT GUYS!**

SUMMER 1991 ISSUE 3

PUBLISHER	CHRISTIAN GORE
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SPECIAL THANKS
JUSTIN STANLEY

SPECIAL HORROR ISSUE

EDITORIAL	Rip-Off Inc.	6
MAIL BAG	Plus Lisa's Mail	7
GOREY DETAILS	FILM THREAT a National Magazine?	14
SCAN	Reviews. Reviews, Reviews PLUS-A Little Extra!	15
FESTIVALS	THE USA FILM FEST: DANGEROUSLY INBRED TEXANS	30
COVER STORY	JORG BUTTGEREIT is The King of Death	34
INTERVIEW	Indie Producer MARK HEADLEY pinches pennies	48
FEATURE	Chinese Fix- JACKIE CHAN Kicks Ass!	54
ANOTHER FEATURE	On the set of JOHN STRYSIK's <i>The Spirit Gallery</i>	58
KNOW THE ENEMY	JIM CAMERON and GALE ANN HURD break the bank!	62
INTERVIEW	Inside the mind of CHARLES PINION	64
COMICS	Paranoid Jizz	70

Entire contents © 1991 FILM THREAT Video, INC. All letters, tapes, submissions or other stuff should be sent to me at FILM THREAT VIDEO GUIDE, PO Box 3170, Los Angeles, CA 90078-3170. (Yes, use the PO Box because we moved. AGAIN!) Send Fed-Ex or Express Mail packages to our shipping address (you know, the warehouse): FTVG, 2805 W. Magnolia, Burbank, CA 91505. Any unsolicited material is considered OURS to use in FTVG or FILM THREAT, so don't get any crummy ideas about trying to squeeze money out of us. Call or send for ad rates, because we're real cheap and we happen to believe that paid advertisements help round out the pages and space the articles. PH# (818) 848-8971, (818) 848-5956-FAX. We will trade ads with other mags. Videos, comics, and other mags will be considered for review. So waste some postage and give us something to write about! FILM THREAT is a registered trademark of L.F.P., Inc.

Presenting The Ultimate Beach-Bimbo Party Tape Of Our Generation...

Filmed
in
Bikini-Vision

Beach Trash Gone Bad... REAL BAD!

Caribbean Gold Girls

Exposed!

HUBBA!
HUBBA!
HUBBA!



Boing!



Banned In Mexico!

CAUTION: Contents may cause sunstroke!



Boing!



Boing!

Boing!



Big-Budget Production Values!

Boing!



Ouch!

Free!



Free Poster With
Every Tape Sold! Suitable
For Ceiling or Shower
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The Most Shocking Flesh-Carnival Ever Filmed!

NAKED

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TAUNT, TEASE, WIGGLE AND SLIDE THEIR WET & NASTY BODIES ON A YACHT,
ON A STAGE, ANYWHERE TO WIN IN THIS CONTEST TO END ALL CONTESTS!

"Buy This Tape... Now!"
—The Broke Producer

"Break Out The Lubricant!"
—The Copywriter

"Boing!..."
—Mr. Johnson

Send \$20 To:
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Pier 60 Productions, Inc., P.O. Box 7616 Clearwater, FL 34618

• Harlots A-Hoy! • Bimbo's A-Go-Go! • Girls A-Plenty! •



RIP-OFF, INC.

ANYONE WHO HAS TRIED TO make a film or video knows that the work and costs involved are enormous, and that in a dollars-per-second perspective, this is probably the most expensive business in the world. How much more money did you have to pull out of your pockets because you went over budget (if you even had one)? How many times did you go without eating or paying your rent because you had to buy film stock or pay for duplication? You suffered for your art, eh? Well, how would you feel if somebody else was making money off your work?

Bootlegging is the single biggest problem facing independent filmmakers and distributors. Case in point: Mondo Video. Operated by Donald Farmer, this mail-order company not only has a long history of ripping off its customers, but is guilty of selling bootlegs. A fact that is admitted plainly in Farmer's catalog: "We have recently added new equipment which we hope will make it possible to fill all in-stock orders in 30 days." Could that be ILLEGAL DUPLICATION equipment? This same catalog includes many unusual titles, including director Jorg Buttgereit's *Nekromantik*. After being informed of this situation, Buttgereit and producer Manfred Jelinski quickly told me they had had problems with Farmer in the past and asked FILM THREAT VIDEO, the film's legal U.S. distributor, to "push him off the road."

We then wrote Farmer, threatening legal action, and soon received a letter from a certain David Holman, who informed us that they have agreed "to terminate all sales of this title," and that Mondo Video is consulting with an attorney regarding any possible copyright problems.

Sure they are. A simple letter from us has them convinced to change their ways and go legit.

No matter how tempted you are, DO NOT order tapes from Mondo Video.

Buying bootlegged tapes undermines the foundation of the underground/independent filmmaker's economy. If they don't make money from their films, they cannot continue to make new ones. If so, we will soon live in a world without real entertainment choices—and be forced to endure the whims of such innovative tastemakers as Blockbuster Video and Steven Spielberg.

Faithful reader Vic Stanley recently provided me with a thick dossier concerning Mondo Video's lack of respect for both mail-order protocol and international copyright laws. While Stanley's initial problem with Mondo stems from trying to buy bootleg tapes, he has been trying for the last year to focus attention on this cancerous tumor infecting the body of the underground. Unfortunately, he's had little success because most of the people who have the power to help stop Farmer in his tracks (i.e. editors like myself) are too chickenshit to call a crook a crook. Stanley contacted several of our competitors in order to bring this problem to light—and was chastised for his naiveté. That sucks. It's the press' job to expose bullshit when it can, especially when it seems so deep.

I'm not a saint, but theft, cowardice and deceit pisses me off, and I suspect that I may get a letter from Don Farmer asking me to shut my mouth. Well Don, if you're out there, save the ink, paper and stamp because I won't stop.

David E. Williams



NTSC OR NOT TO NTSC?

from Jaroslav Kralc
2 "THE GULLS"
MAREWOOD
SOUTHAMPTON

Dear Film Threat Person,

Having recently received an issue of your excellent magazine and wishing to partake in the general low tone of events, there remains but one question. Are the videos advertised e.g. Twisted Issues and T.V. Splinter available on an European PAL system or all original art now confined entirely to American NTSC?

Please let me know in the dandy S.A.E. supplied

for more best wishes
Yours

Jaroslav,

Unfortunately, we are slaves to the NTSC system. However we have been in contact with underground strongholds in Europe that may be able to help us out of this mess. Be patient.

NEKRODUMMIES

W. D. ROBINSON
• 31119 Brae Burn Ave. Hayward, CA 94541 •

7-19-91

DEAR SIR,

WE GET A KICK OUT OF SCARY MOVIES AND LOVE SEX, WOULD LIKE TO BUY A COUPLE OF "NEKROMANTIC" TAPES, BUT WE DONT LIKE THEM "TOO" SCARY. ARE THE "NOT SO RECENTLY DECEASED" (FROM HUSTLER MAG) COMPUTER IMAGES OR ACTORS IN COSTUME AND MAKE UP? WE ARE OVER 21 YRS OF AGE

PLEASE ADVISE,

THANK YOU

ENCLOSURE SELF ADDRESSED ENVELOPE, WITH STAMPS

W.D.,

Computer images, actors, make-up!!!!?? What the fuck are you talking about? Germans made that movie. It's practically a documentary!

HUMILIATED SUBSCRIBER

GARY ALAN CROWDUS

116 St. Marks Place, Apt. #8, New York, NY 10009 Phone 212 420-4222

June 27, 1991

Dear Christian,

Can you let me know whether my subscription has expired?

As I'm sure many of your subscribers explain to you, they would rather receive Film Threat via mail in a plain brown wrapper than be exposed to the shame and humiliation of buying a copy publicly at a newsstand or bookstore.

Sincerely,

Gary,

Of course your sub hasn't expired. If we didn't send you a FREE copy, we'd have to actually pay for your long-winded ramblings. {NOTE-Mr. Crowdus is the editor of *Cineaste* magazine, a fine publication devoted to the art of the cinema.)

THUNDER FROM DOWN UNDER



RODNEY SHAW
P.O. BOX 12008
A1 BECKETT ST
MELBOURNE
AUSTRALIA
3000.

GREETINGS FROM AUSTRALIA,

I AM WRITING TO YOU FILM THREAT FOLK AS IT IS IM-FUCKIN-POSSIBLE TO GET A REGULAR SUPPLY OF YOUR MIGHTY FINE MAGAZINE IN THIS FAIR CITY. SO COULD YOU GUYS RUSH ME INFO ON SUBSCRIPTION STRAIGHT AWAY. ALSO SEND STUFF ABOUT FILM THREAT TEE-SHIRTS AND VIDEO MAS.

YOURS IN BLOOD & GUTS

Rockin' Rodney

P.S. I HAVE ENCLOSED A FLYER FOR MY ROCKIN' HARDCORE RADIO SHOW.

Rockin' Rodney,

Will everyone now turn to pages 85 and 87 of your text to find the proper subscription forms for both FTVG and the new & improved *FILM THREAT* magazine.

DOUBLE DOORS SLAM

FILM THREAT V.G.

I pretty much like everything about your magzine. The only problem I had with issue 2 was the completely boring story on the behind the scenes of the doors movie. I live in Dallas. Oliver Stone has been here, he's here now shooting JFK. BIG FUCKING DEAL. I've seen his work, and think it is really rather bland.

Corey Sienega bored the hell out of me. I'm sure her story impressed her friends. I mean hey, being printed in a real mag. like FILMTHREAT. I guess my life is a complete waste compared to hers. I mean I never get to worship the media hyped gods like Morrison. Don't get me wrong, the music is good, but the world has progressed a little since the late sixties. All this peace love regurgitation doesn't work for me. If you want world peace join Pres Bush's New World Order. The sixties and seventies should be studied so that they never happen again. Not glorified by swatchmen, and diet coke heads like Stone.

Lets just buy into the farce, there were no gays in the fifties, everyone lived happily ever after in the sixties, and we can just forget the seventies for now, at least until oliver works his way up to them.

Ditch Sienega, and run a real story not an ego trip. Other than that I liked the issue.

J. Deats
437 Arthur Dr.
Hurst Tx 76053



As for your article concerning the film "The Doors", geez, you must have been really hard up for articles. Fodder like that belongs in such glossrags as PREMIERE, MOVIELINE, or even FILMPAX, but not in FILM THREAT. Anymore articles by that hippie/peacenik/Oliver Stone groupie-turned-typing teacher Corey Sienega and I'll know you're really in trouble. (A side note to La Sienega, my friend, Jeff, received your response to his letter to "FT" in the mail today. Jesus, your almost as slow as I am in responding to something. He'll send you his reply, whatever it may be. However, a simple word of warning, correct my letter in any way and mail it back to me, like you did with Jeff, and I'll hunt you down and drag you back here and show you what it's like to be on an Oliver Stone set in Texas, a non-union state, surrounded by extras and bit players, who are soon going to wonder why they haven't gotten paid for their work. Besides, I already know that I'm wasting too much liquid paper on this useless diatribe anyway. So there!)

Yours truly and sign it.

Steve Langston

Sienega Responds—

Dear Jeff and Steve,

Thank you for your charming fan letters. A few special notes to Mr. Langston: (1) Thanks for the compliment about my article belonging in Movieline or Premiere; (2) You should go in with your "friend" Jeff on a life, because they're cheaper in bulk; (3) Your invitation to Texas is generous, though somewhat frightening. I'll have to think it over.

NO BULL FROM DURHAM

Dear Sir,

I was embarrassed and pale and sad; my breasts pointed inwards together as laughter fell from the nipples in visible music notes that symbolized insanity. The light came in horizontal and jerking lines, like television static, and I knew I was dead, as my sad breasts undrooped and burst quietly through my housecoat and grew in streams down to the floor. Yours truly,

Melissa Jasper
Mrs. Melissa Jasper

(I could use a new housecoat, but a tee-shirt will do.) p.o. box 756 Durham, NH 03824



Mrs. Jasper,

Not surprisingly, I felt completely free to distribute your photos around the office. Comments ranged from "Wow" to "Holy shit." Though we retired the "Nude-Photo-For-T-shirt" offer some time ago, we feel obliged to comply with your request. As my mother once said, "It's not WHAT you ask for, but HOW you ask."

VOCIFEROUS & VICIOUS VANYA

6/15/91

Guys, specifically, Mr. Gore,

In answer to the question that this survey seems to be asking, I say the following:

Although I don't mind getting ~~despise~~ FTVG (what really amounts to a FT Video catalog w/filler) in the mail as a concession until the "new and improved" Film Threat resumes publication, I don't consider it a substitute. I wouldn't subscribe to it in lieu of, or in addition to, Film Threat.

Vanya Edwards
264 W. 23rd St. #3B
NYC 10011

P.S. The new logo sucks.

Vanya,

I know a few people out there who feel exactly the same way you do, so why don't you find them, do your own magazine, and get off our collective fucking backs! The GUIDE is not a catalog with filler. If you bothered to count the pages, you would find that we have no more ads than any comparable publication. Check for yourself.

The GUIDE was developed for two reasons: (1) To continue to cover underground films and videos that the new FILM THREAT magazine cannot. (2) Create a marketplace where filmmakers can get their tapes out to the people who want to buy them. As most filmmakers are broke, they can't afford ad space. By distributing through FILM THREAT VIDEO, they get free ad space, shipping and other services in exchange for a cut of the profits. We aren't getting rich off this, so just ignore our ads if they bother you so much or read Movieline.

MISCELLANEOUS

NUDE PHOTOS OF FEMALE DIRECTOR when you send funds to finish her latest SLASHER. In the name of God help her finish this film! Send check or money order (over \$5) to: Lisa Houle, Blessed Elysium Prod., 100 Sullivan St. #2A, NY, NY 10012

LISA'S MAIL

When I got a call from director Lisa Houle, she was interested in running a classified ad in FTVG that read something like: "Young Female director needs money to finish film. Send cash." I knew even our readers weren't stupid enough to respond to that, so I suggested, "Why don't you send nude photos of yourself to people who contribute money? Or if you're too shy to pose, send nude photos of anybody, how will they know?"

A classic example of how a good idea went wrong, Lisa never sent any nakedness to anyone. However, she did receive some pretty interesting letters. The funny footnote is her film *Pussbucket* is on its way to completion from the contributions of the idiots who received... nothing!



**Puss
Bucket**
FROM THE BROADWAY MUSICAL

-Chris Gore

"THIS FILM WILL BE BURNED
BY CHRISTIANS.
I LOOK FORWARD TO EVENTUALLY
OBTAINING A COPY."

— MARK



Lisa,
Here's 25 bucks,
Make it a good
photo and a
good movie
Penn & Teller

Don't Penn & Teller,
anti-magicians
extraordinaire have
better things to do
with their time
than peruse our
classified section?



DEAR LISA:
OH, I THOUGHT
YOU SAID
"DUDE" PHOTOS.
OH NO, LIKE
TOMORROW TURD!
SORRY, I'M FROM
CALIFORNIA.

SO, YOUR FILM HAS INSANE
RELIGIOUS FUNDIES WHO WANT
TO KILL FOR JESUS - WHAT
IS IT - A DOCUMENTARY
ABOUT GEORGE BUSH'S COFFIN?
WELL, ANY FILM WHOSE
TITLE INCLUDES THE
WORD "PUS" IS OK BY ME.
ACTUALLY YOUR PROTAG
SOUNDS GREAT.. INDUSTRIAL,
NOT THE VACUUM TRASH...
TRASH....

P.S. CONSIDERING WHAT AN
OVERWHELMINGLY HUGE
TASK FILM MAKING IS,
YOU SEEM TO BE
MAINTAINING YOUR SENSE
OF HUMOR ADMIRABLY.

PPS. I KNOW OPTICAL SOUND
IS PRETTY lame, so
IF YOUR MOVIE HAS
LOTS OF COOL MUSIC
IN IT YOU MIGHT
WANT TO STICK WITH
PUTTING IT ON VIDEO
AND LEAVING IT IN STEREO
EVERYTHING!

LISA
IN THE NAME OF GOD SEND ME
THE NUDE PHOTOS, ENCLOSED
IS A MONEY ORDER FOR \$10.00

Hope it helps
Mark Kelley

It's truly sad
how desperate
some men are.



Eric Hammer, Terrence Fleming and a voluptuous babe ham it up in *Pussbucket*.

FAST FORWARD

GLAD I THOUGHT OF IT!

BURN IN HELL! *Art Directors at ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY*

By Chris Gore



Our classic logo.

Their NEW, more film-like, one-time look.



Slate-boy.



Clappy.

At least we chose a name that didn't sound like a venereal disease.

ONE OF THE GREATEST of God's ten commandments, "Thou Shalt Not Steal," is obviously held in little regard at Time/Warner, Inc., the mega-company that produces nearly every magazine, book, record and movie on the market—and which also publishes the "hip" magazine, *Entertainment Weekly*.

In the May 10, 1991 issue, a witty piece called "Cinema Literacy" offered readers a chance to test their knowledge of film. The

article was accompanied by a cute little companion named *Clappy*. This Disney-esque version of a clapboard guided the reader through the quiz. Interestingly, *Clappy* bears a striking resemblance to FILM THREAT's mascot, *Slate-Boy*, seen briefly in last issue of FTVG and in our promotional brochures. Many of our readers noticed this and quickly brought it to our attention, including Don Jankiewicz of Upland, California, who sent us xeroxes of both characters.

Anthropomorphizing a clapboard may not be a new or original idea, but when we saw the cover with the clever use of a clapboard on the *EW* logo, we knew someone on the art staff was a FILM THREAT reader. View the evidence, then play God and judge for yourself.

If you agree with us, please write to *Entertainment Weekly* and let them know what a bunch of thieving scumbags you think they are. Send this page to: *EW*, 1675 Broadway, New York, NY 10019.

HORRACTION CINEMA PRODUCTIONS

PRESENTS

STEPS FROM HELL



Witness the horrors as an immortal psychopath, a transvestite zombie and a homicidal nymphomaniac go on an all out blood drenched killing spree to release from hell a demonic beast who will grant them ultimate power. It's a shockingly graphic journey as this bizarre satanic trio climb the STEPS FROM HELL.

Starring
Bernardo Rosa, Ron Odell, Rocky Tucker
and LaJoy Farr
Special Effects by Alex Diaz
Music by Tony Zawinul
Written & Directed by James & Patricia Tucker

©1990 HORRACTION CINEMA PRODUCTIONS
Running time: 79 minutes Color film
(VHS ONLY)

\$24.95

TO: Horraction Cinema Productions
3100 Riverside Drive
LA CA. 90027

COMING SOON FROM
Horraction Cinema

L U N A T I C
Some minds should
be wasted

I. THE STORE

The first step in selecting the video is finding a store. The store you choose should fit your lifestyle and personality. Provided you have either. Here are some helpful things to ask yourself about the store you choose.

How menstrual does the store get when you're late returning the video?

The Average Person's
Guide To Successfully
Living On Earth

HOW TO Watch A Video

How vigorously do they prosecute?
Do good looking babes work there?
Do they give out free stuff?

Is the store frequented by overweight girls who have "cottage cheese legs" and nowhere better to go?

II. THE HELP

At real video places, there is always a brigade of high school students working there that will descend like locusts upon your every whim. It's probably their first job, and the only white hot synapse smoldering in their cerebral cortex is to be as damn helpful as earthly possible. At convenience stores, on the other hand, there are guys named Buzz with soul patches who are frankly more concerned with keeping the men's magazines behind the counter from getting "all gooey." You do the math. Then, shop where you're more comfortable.



III. THE SHELVES

Be careful here. This is where most errors in video rental occur. Because the films are sectioned off in categories like "Action", "Drama", and "Comedy". Luckily, some video chains are simplifying things by labeling their video sections with more accurate titles, such as "Waste of Money," "Brainless Violence," "Director Sleeps With Star", and the ever prominent "Can't Act."

If you're one of those people who frequent the Self-Improvement, Fitness, Sports, and How-To sections of the



video store, please go back to the first step of this how-to section and build yourself a life.

IV. THE COVER

Any cover with an illustration you could have drawn yourself should be avoided, unless you like being ripped off. This film is most likely an Italian ripoff of a successful American venture and has

probably been renamed more times than Liz Taylor. Example: *Fins of Horror*, (Also titled: *Aliens of Horror*, *Platoon of Horror*, *Extra-Terrestrials of Horror*, *Ghostbusters of Horror*, *Prom Nights of Horror*, *Cross Dressers of Horror*, *Silence of the Horror*, and *Scent Of The Monkey*.)

But, just as some covers should be avoided at all costs, there are a few you should NEVER

pass up. For instance, always get ANY video with Sybil Danning on the cover. It's worth it. Trust me.

V. THE WAY TO BEHAVE

Video stores, like most bastions of society that inadvertently appeal to all walks of life, have very few rules of order. Instead, a strange form of "elevator protocol" is observed. There are basically only four rules to follow:

1. Eye contact between men and women while in the "softcore" section is strictly prohibited.
2. Keep your hands off my damn video.
3. The thing where you're standing in front of one section of videos and you can tell that the person migrating toward you is wanting to look at the section you're currently browsing, so you have to move and let them have your spot and look at the videos where you left off kinda from the side angle.
4. Protect yourself at all times, no punching in the clenches and come out fighting.

5. Questions to avoid asking:

"Turtles! Turtles! Will you bring me the turtles?"
"Do you have a copy of 'Who's That Girl?'"
"This is due back on Wednesday?"
"What's Wednesday?"
"Do you rent VCRs with these?"

VI. WATCHING THE VIDEO

1. Ambience

The home environment—a place you're comfortable with. No more sweaty crowds or gooey cola product, candy wrappers and popcorn heaped on the floor—unless, of course, you watch the film at Oprah's house.

2. Food

Simple rule. If whatever you're eating makes more noise than the movie, stop eating. This includes ice cream, jawbreakers, and your significant other.



3. The Good Stuff

In a perfect world, all films would be 100% watchable. Riveting. Engrossing. Unfortunately, we live in this world and most movies fall far short of perfection.

That's why it's so vitally important for the viewer to learn how to watch a video in the 90's. Given the fact that most of the flick is crap, you'd better learn how to fast forward to the sex and violence scenes you rented it for in the first place. Unless, of course, you're that trendy film nerd that would never stoop to watching a rental.

In which case, just go to any restaurant and listen to other people's conversation—or you could go to a Bergman showing.

VII. RATING THE VIDEO

Instead of rating by a certain number of stars, do what we do.

Use your favorite whiney film critic. For instance, we give *Silence of the Lambs*—4 Siskels.

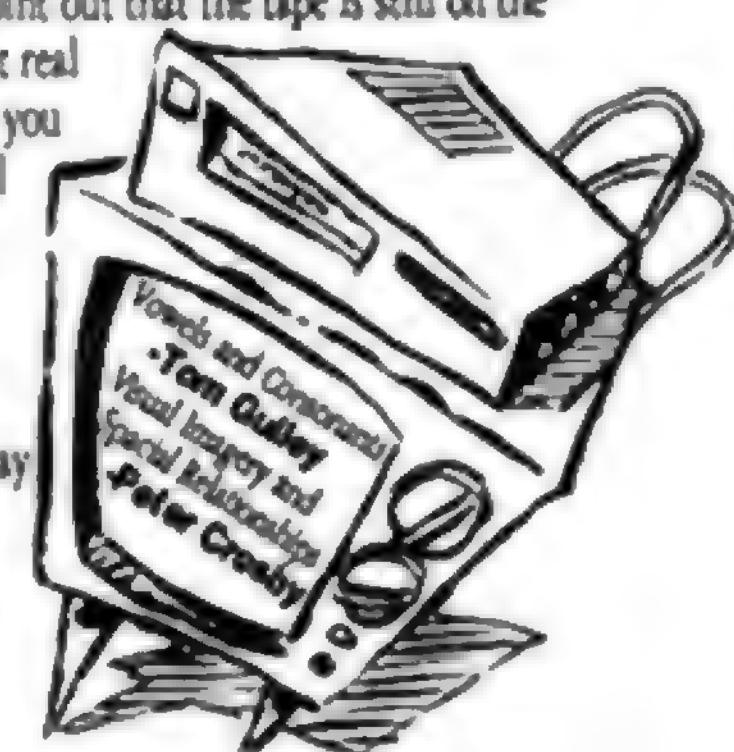
Films can also be rated by the amount of consumables used during the film. *Terms of Endearment*—20 Puffs. *Welcome Home, Roxy Cornichael*—5 Kaopectates. *Inside Christy Canyon*—3 Trojans.



VIII. RETURNING THE VIDEO

Outside the traditional "just drop it off" method of returning the video, there are two commonly accepted alternatives.

1. Lie. I returned it, you fools. Get that neo-70's Bruce Dern Nam-vet paranoid look in your eyes. "What are you people trying to pull here?"
2. Screw with their minds. Insist you don't have it, then put it back on the shelf. Tape theft detectors don't work when you come back to the store—just on someone trying to leave the store. When you point out that the tape is still on the shelf, they get real flustered and you can blackmail them into giving you a bunch more free rentals, which you may then parlay into more chicanery.



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THE GOREY DETAILS

WHY PUBLISH A NATIONAL FILM THREAT?

Fuck. There I wrote it. Feels good especially since I won't be able to do that in the new FILM THREAT. Why? When a magazine reaches a circulation of 250,000 it comes under a lot of scrutiny. If I used the "F" word or showed tits, FT would be thrown out of a chain of 7-Elevens in Texas. I can put whatever I want on the cover, but it's in my best interests to choose something commercial (yet funny or mean) so it will sell and I can continue to subvert young minds in the years to come. Welcome to the real world of publishing. These are all difficult factors I now have to balance. I'm still as crass as ever and if you don't believe me pick up a copy of the new FT and read it cover to cover. Tell me if you think I "Sold Out."

Preaching to the converted is dull. I should know since I've been doing it for the past six and a half years in FILM THREAT. Having the opportunity to speak to a larger audience means I will be read by people who will disagree with my opinions. Sounds like fun since I love to fuck with people! Besides, there's no money in staying "underground" forever (though my heart will always still be with worms, dirt and the dead).

THE DEAL

Okay, here's my advice. All artists should quit art school and take business classes. Why? Because the "Art" part of things is easy—read a couple of books, study your area of interest by participating—but becoming successful at it requires a knowledge of business. I had to become good at business very quickly in order to be able to do what I want which is to put out the greatest film magazine that ever existed. If you're too lazy to do the business class thing here's some basic advice:

NEVER TAKE THE FIRST OFFER

I met with a Japanese investor who wanted to put \$250,000 into FILM THREAT if I changed the name. Jello Biafra was approached with a similar offer for The Dead Kennedys. Lesson—DO NOT COMPROMISE.

GET A LAWYER

Most are scum but they are a necessary evil. Let the lawyer be an "asshole." It makes you look like the "nice" guy in the negotiations and you'll end up getting what you want. Lesson—GET WHAT YOU WANT.

EXPECT TO GET SCREWED ON YOUR FIRST DEAL

Why? Because you are unknown—until you prove yourself. How can you have the opportunity to do that unless given the chance? I know many directors, writers, and actors who took shitty deals for their first films but are now doing well because they proved they could do it. Lesson—PAY YOUR DUES.

If I hadn't learned these lessons, the new FILM THREAT may well have been called something lame like *Movieline* (whose tagline incidentally is "The Hit of the Underground." Did I miss something?)

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Good Bite!

Christian Gore



SCAN

Reviews by Gabriel Alvarez, Dave Parker, Corey Sienega, David E. Williams and Rowdy Yates.
For more info about these and other films, consult our classified section and other ads.

9 CONFESSIONS OF A SOUTHERN PUNK

20 min/16mm



8 BABY ON PARADE

20 min/16mm/B&W
Crescent Pictures

Although they follow similar themes and are both exceptionally well made, these two films from North Carolinian director Dorne Pentes could not be more different.

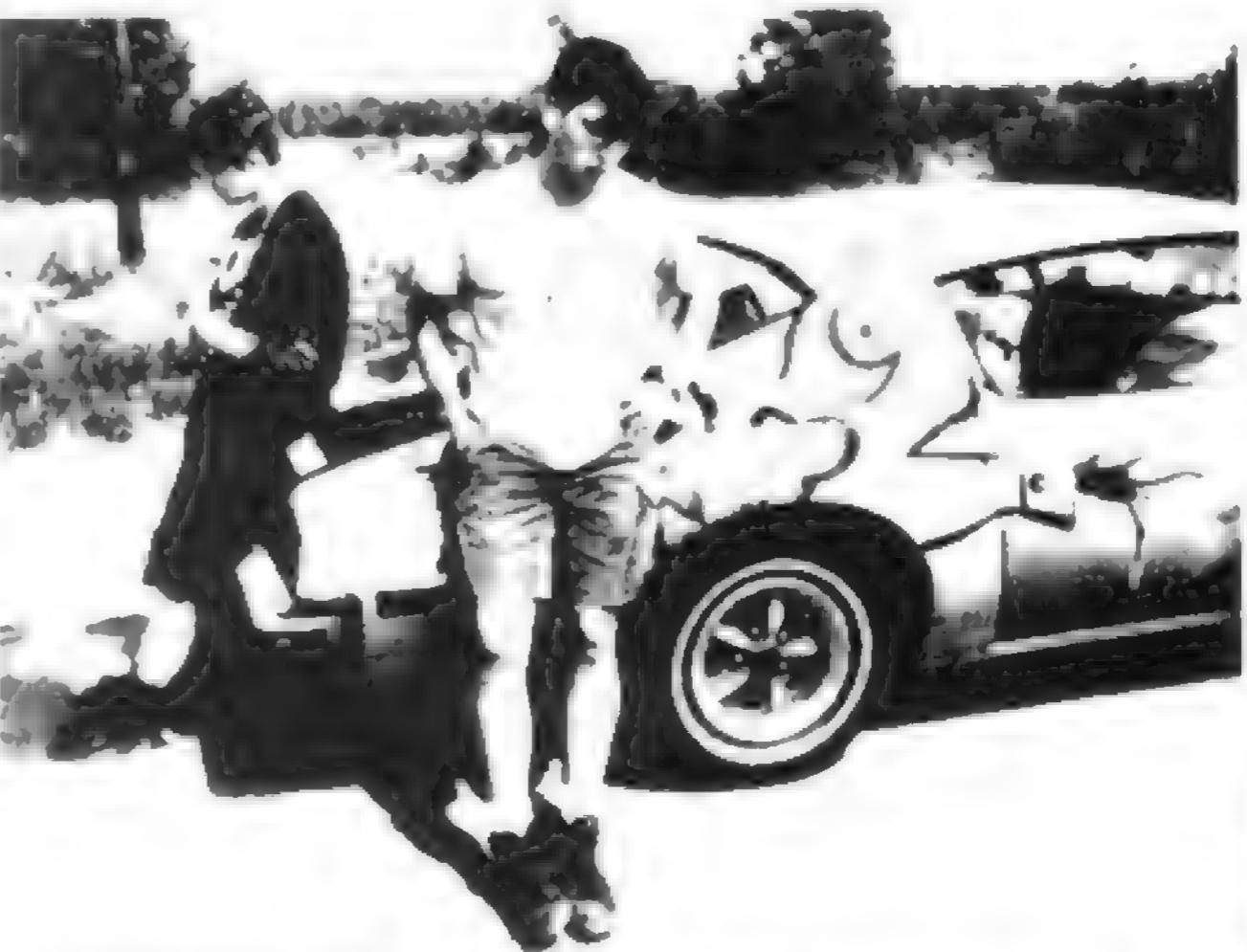
Following the life of the titular rebel, *Confessions* is the tale of a happy-go-lucky, alternate-lifestyle couple (well played by Barbi Van Schaik and Mike Walker) that is suddenly faced with the difficult emotional problem of unplanned pregnancy. While that may be nightmarish enough, our troubled pair also seem to live in the same country as the Dukes of Hazzard, forcing them to battle anti-choice zealots and the stereotypical (or are they?) denizens of Hooterville, USA. Though not exactly a comedy per say, this short romp does have some laughs, with most of the good ones coming from Pentes' excellent play of Southern accents against punk mentalities. The music by various provincial bands is great, adding freewheeling fun to scenes of bitchin'

Cameros hotwheeling through backwater hollows, our heros running a gauntlet of Family Planning protesters and finally executing the best revenge against the overly-vocal Moral Majority minority.

Serious and thoughtful, *Baby on Parade* is a gritty depiction of how underprivileged women and children survive in the modern urban world. It's not pretty or fun, but this film is honestly touching as we see what lengths a 10 year-old boy (Robert Bennett) will go to in order to ensure his family's survival. In one scene, he resorts to shoplifting baby food to feed his sister. The young actor is amazing. Without resorting to pathetic Spielbergisms, Pentes carefully draws out a brilliant performance based on subtle eye movements and body language. The rest of the cast is also very good, but the film hinges on Bennett's performance—making it that much better.

Without trying to sound cliché, Pentes is one filmmaker I'll watch for in the future. The fact that he deals with such serious topics as troubled childhood and societal repression (without being a pretentious fool), makes these films all that more welcome.

— D.E.W.



Top: SOUTHERN youth; bottom: BABY grit.

8

NO SKIN OFF MY ASS

75 min/B&W/Super 8
A J.D.'s Production

It's your typical boy meets boy story about a young gay hairdresser who meets the skinhead of his dreams in the park one winter day. In case someone should miss the reference, the first ten minutes of the film consists mainly of the opening credits from Robert Altman's film *A Cold Day in the Park* starring Sandy Dennis (which becomes a boring visual when filmed in Super 8 off of a TV screen). The music playing over the

opening sequence, however, is a catchy tune entitled "Skinhead Guys Just Turn Me On" and, although I found it a bit fatuous the first time around, I've recently found myself humming it while waiting for the train or when I'm put on hold...both situations posing obvious potential embarrassments.

Director Bruce La Bruce plays the Karen Carpenter-loving hairstylist who is helplessly attracted to the lonely and stoic skinhead he finds and invites to his home. Bruce's attraction toward the young skin and his desire to rub his bald head and lick it

has completely sapped his passion for hairstyling. The skinhead is played by newcomer (forgive the pun) Klaus von Brücher, who can't understand his own attraction to the flaming La Bruce character because, as we all know, skins are supposed to hate "queers." With the helpful advice of his sister, ("If you're a skinhead, you're stupid and if you're queer, you're smart") however, von Brücher allows himself to be together with his true love and then they spend the rest of the film

spreading peanut butter in between



Skinhead guys turn him on.

each other's toes and performing certain oral favors for each other. Their performances are quite impressive, and they are entertaining actors as well. La Bruce's film seems to be directed toward a predominately gay audience, but *No Skin Off My Ass* is really for anyone—male or female, straight or not—who is a bit curious and wants to see a smart and funny movie that offers something...a little different.

— C.S.

side burns—as well as a "burning love gun."

Return of the King is blessed with good actors, clever dialogue and expert pacing. Shot in 16mm, there is a superior, almost *Twilight Zone* look to this film. Bridges successfully develops a plot within a short time frame while also generating a few genuine chuckles.

The film's length serves a great purpose in that not a single frame is wasted and all that you see is integral to the story. It's quite possible that if *Return of the King* were longer it might lose some of its charm.

— G.A.

RETURN OF THE KING

12 min/16mm/B&W
Lizardlicks Prods.

The group Living Colour wrote a song entitled "Elvis Is Dead." I agree whole-heartedly. However, director Bruce Bridges' *Return of the King* is a slick, entertaining short film that deals with the phenomenon of the rotund, karate-posing legend in an amusing and slightly off-center manner. Due to the short length of the film, it would be detrimental to reveal too many plot details, but rest assured you will see plenty of



THE JET BENNY SHOW

90 min/Super 8
Film Threat Video

This is the most entertaining one-joke movie I've ever seen. I'm not sure what made director Roger Evans feel that he could turn a so-so Jack Benny impersonation into a feature but I'm glad he did. It's a self-reflexive thing, not unlike the old *Jack Benny Show* itself.

In color and set in the

EXPLAINING OUR RATINGS:

10

Perfect! A must for any collection and worth twice the price!

9

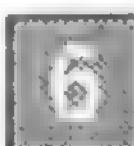
Excellent. Definitely worth buying.

8

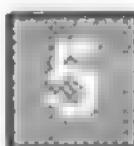
Great. We're jealous and wish we'd thought of it.

7

Very Good. Would get the filmmaker an "A" at U.C.L.A.



Good. But not "very good." Wait until you have extra cash.



A few good scenes, but only at the 7-Eleven security-cam level.



Dull. But interesting at scan speed.



Trance-inducing. Not interesting, even at scan speed.



Bad. You have a new blank tape.



Sucks! No explanation necessary.

future, Rochester is a robot who pilots Benny's spaceship, the Maxwell. Through a mechanical mishap, Jet (who is a little more flaming than the Jack Benny I remember) crash lands into the middle of a political revolution while searching for his ship which the amnesia-stricken Rochester has hidden. He falls for the daughter of the leader of the revolution, Miranda, and decides to help her and her brother, Carmen, (do I need to explain that one?) in their efforts to help their ailing father save his land. Or something like that—it honestly doesn't matter because the best parts of the movie are incidental.

The special effects include some impressive matte/blue screen work, imaginative cut-out animation, as well as figure pixilation for some really funny sequences. At one point, two of the main characters are giving chase and are convincingly and hilariously substituted by Barbie-sized dolls. For just a second I was fooled and I still laugh about it.

While it too often feels that *Jet Benny* is moving just one or two beats behind (a deathly quality in a comedy), it's still quite an enjoyable achievement.

—C.S.

7

ARRIVE ALIVE:

Tony Scott's Complete Counterambush-Antiterrorism Driving Course
58 min/Video
Paladin Press

When I first moved to Southern California, I was instantly struck by how everybody drove like spoiled children. And while Los Angeles doesn't have the sort of problems as, say, Beirut, this is the driving course that every good citizen should have to pass

before getting their license. According to this tape, most kidnappings and assassinations occur while the victim is traveling in a car. Well, attempting to merge onto the North-bound Hollywood Freeway at rush hour is a similar experience. In fact, I'd almost rather be assassinated or kidnapped than endure the notorious LA gridlock.

Fortunately, this tape offers comprehensive instruction on such exotic driving tactics as the J-turn, the bootlegger's turn, and high-speed, multiple-car ramming. Just the kind of things you need to know when some asshole is about to cut you off and make you miss that all-important last exit to Burbank.

Shot on video and presented with a somewhat classroom-like feel, these maneuvers are first diagrammed at the chalkboard and then demonstrated in the field by highly-trained professionals. Nothing could be simpler, and the disclaimer is hilarious.

Also containing several gruesome scenes from actual assassinations (just to let one know what lies in store for the ill-prepared motorist), this tape is a must for both the casual Sunday driver and the avid J.G. Ballard devotee.

—D.E.W.

9

THE DEAD NEXT DOOR

84 min/Super 8

FILM THREAT VIDEO

Probably the most expensive Super 8 feature ever made (reportedly \$100,000!), this tongue-in-cheek living dead flick is a stunner. The opening sequence features sweeping helicopter shots as rotting hordes overrun the target-rich suburban wasteland, quickly establishing this picture as an

THIS ACTUALLY GOT MADE



THEY BITE: Susie Owens' money shot.

A low-budget feature starring a Playboy Playmate almost guarantees plenty of nubile, naked flesh and the promotional photos for *They Bite*, a "fishy" tale of marine mutants from outer space, seem to confirm this notion. As you look at this revealing picture of Susie Owens, you're immediately taken aback by her beauty. Your eyes slowly scan the smooth curvatures of her slender body, examining each flexing muscle, catching a glimpse of her enticingly exposed... Wait a second! Are those fangs protruding from between her...? (You get the idea.)

Directed by Brett Piper and produced by Bill (Deadtime Stories) Links, *They Bite* is the story of homicidal aqua-aliens who have been savagely dismembering unlucky Florida sun worshippers. Police photos of victims accidentally wind up in the hands of first-time porno director Mel Duncan, who is ordered by his producer to change his skin flick into a sea monster saga entitled, *Invasion of the Fishfuckers* (which the actual film's producers may change to the less threatening *Fish Molesters*).

Problems soon arise when not only must Duncan contend with the anti-smut organization, Blue Noses for a Purer America, but with the tide of galactic ocean-dwelling slashers as well. Throw in a wet T-shirt contest, an underwater spaceship, porn actor Ron Jeremy and *They Bite* might leave its mark. •



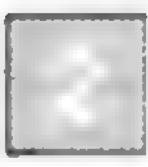
Gruesome zombie experiments in **THE DEAD NEXT DOOR**.

epic that surpasses even the scale of George Romero's staggering efforts. Set five years after the beginning of a zombie plague, the film plays on several levels: as a serious splatter film, a clever (though somewhat corny) parody of its predecessors, and an example of what can be done outside the studio system. Following a team of SWAT-like ghoul killers, the story sticks closely to the Romero/*Dawn of the Dead* tradition, but adds new twists such as a Jim Jones-like cult leader who harbors the living dead, and a pro-zombie protest group that is ultimately beaten and eaten. Stylishly directed by J.R. Bookwalter, *Dead* was partially financed by Sam Raimi, who has since disowned the project as an embarrassing cash cow, which seems absurd considering the quality of the production.

— D.E.W.

NO SUBTLETY

13 min/Film
Ben Rock Prod.



Ten more appropriate titles for this film:

10. No Acting.
9. No Direction.
8. No Writing.
7. No Lighting.
6. No Violence.
5. No Ideas.
4. No Point.
3. No Good Reason To Exist.
2. No Tits.
1. No One Should Be Forced to Watch This Shit.

— D.P.

VENUS FLYTRAP



65 min/Video
Lost Angel

Psycho-yuppie killers prey upon poor unwitting juvenile delinquents in this feature length video by T. Michael and produced by Kevin M. Glover. It's about time. It's the perfect video revenge for anyone who is sick of worthless punks harassing people on the streets for change or just their own pathetic idea of entertainment. After holding

up a record store, the young punks Turk, Wimp, and B.B. are discovered by a seemingly innocent yuppie couple. The punks make their first mistake in forcing their way back to the couple's home. Things take a turn for the surreal when the yuppies talk the punks into a game of strip darts and then join in on a round of Russian roulette. As suspicions grow and tensions mount, *Flytrap* unfortunately dives into cliché with the requisite rape scene. The violence is halted before things get too ugly, however, when Wimp and Turk decide their hearts aren't really in it. The yuppie woman who was almost raped tries to seduce the young punk because she feels rejected. When Wimp still refuses her, she finally convinces him by saying, "Come on Wimp, show me you're a man!" Who wrote this? Some product of backwoods inbreeding? This disgusting turn of events is somewhat rectified when it becomes clear that this is all part of the elaborate sadistic

yuppie plan.

Flytrap has a pretty solid screenplay, even if some of the dialogue borders on the cheesy side, and utilizes some interesting video camera work. The performances are decent with Wimp (Michael Cappellupo) turning in a genuinely effective performance. Producer Kevin Glover is great as yuppie-gone-mad Rod, giving the video its creepiest moments by far.

— C.S.

LOVE BITES

8

75 min/Video
Lost Angel

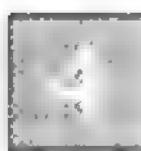
How many times have you asked yourself, "Gosh, when is someone gonna make a gay vampire movie?" Well, grieve no more, *Love Bites* is exactly that. And, what's more, it's not too bad. But first, let's make one thing clear—you don't have to be gay to enjoy this film. I dug it and I'm not gay (although most of the FTVG staff reportedly is).

It's about this guy named Jake Hunter who's a vampire killer. The problem is, he's never even seen a vampire, much less offed one. But, that changes when Count Sanders blows into town. So, enlisting the aid of a cocky young guy named Leslie Allison Knight, he sets off to plunge his stake into the evil Count's body. However, things don't work as planned when the vampire and his would-be killer, fall head over heels in love.

The standout here is Christopher Ladd as the incredibly queeny assistant. He's very funny as is much of the film. A very, very low budget, but an overall solid effort from director Marvin Jones. I should also add that the box warns that the film

contains full-frontal nudity. Be aware, this is not porn, but there are some johnsons clearly visible. But, if you can handle those four dicks parading around on screen in *Mobsters*, you can easily deal with these.

- D.P.

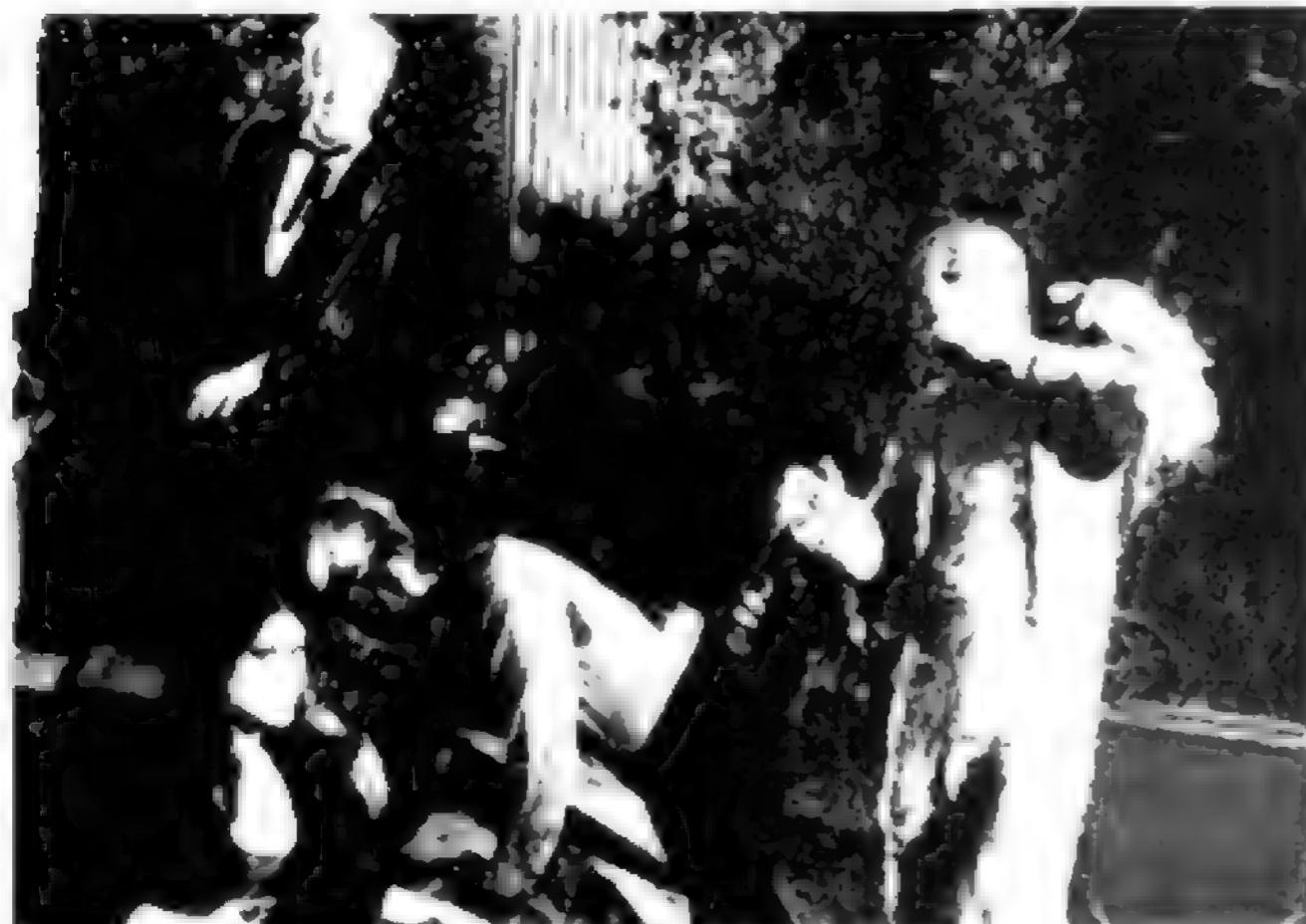


ON THE TRAIL OF ED WOOD

60 min/Video
Videosonic Arts

Okay, I admit to having a passing interest in Ed Wood Jr. (he is a Jr., even though the producers of this tape left it off the title). I watched *Glen or Glenda*, *Plan Nine from Outer Space*, *Bride of the Monster* and *Orgy of the Dead* just to see what all the hoopla was about and I think they pretty much all sucked. Let's face it, if a couple of nerdy authors (those wacky Medved brothers) hadn't picked *Plan Nine* as the worst movie ever made, nobody would give a good Goddamn. His movies are truly hellish to sit through. But, not half as horrible as sitting through this tape. Even the geeks that jerk off to *Orgy of the Dead* would snooze through this.

Hey, if you like Ed Wood Jr., you don't need this tape.



Ed Wood's anti-classic, ORGY OF THE DEAD.

Just stay home, watch *Plan Nine*, giggle about those pie-pan saucers and talk about what an unsung genius he truly was. And, if you don't like Ed Wood Jr., please... don't start.

- D.P.

8 LOVE, DRUGS & VIOLENCE & ANIMATION OF THE APOCALYPSE & BEST OF THE FESTS

60 min each/Color and B&W
Picture Start Inc.

These three compilation tapes offer the best of festival-oriented independent film-making. What does that mean exactly? Well, let's just say that most of these NEA-sponsored, AFI-condoned, NYU (or CalArts) type short films eschew the edginess of many of their more underground counterparts. They're too polished. Too well lit. Too... good. Ultimately though, this display of technical proficiency, witty writing and smart acting (things that are all but absent in the bulk of short films) pays off.

Love, Drugs & Violence sets the tone with Cliff Roth's video cut-up *The Reagans Speak Out On Drugs*, a cru-

elly clever reworking of Ron and Nancy's fire-side condemnation of recreational pharmaceuticals.

Watching the stick-figured former First Lady utter the doctored phrase "Say yes to drugs! Say yes to crack!" with Ron steadfastly nodding off in support is priceless. Mean-spirited? Maybe. Funny? Definitely! The highlight of the tape is Marc Finkel's *Purge*, the tale of amour

divided by an invisible and seemingly invincible force. Undaunted, our would-be lovers don their birthday suits, are strapped to the respective grills of two Peterbuilt trucks and hurled together at high speed with blinding results. It reminded me of my first time.

Animation of the Apocalypse flips the coin to focus on the blight of urban existence and general morbidity. Just my kind of stuff. First up is *The Beholder*, a watercolored first-person journey through what could have been the neighborhood around the old FILM THREAT office on Hollywood Blvd. Psycho drunks babble, cruel waitresses patter and the smell of garbage seems to waft from the screen. It's almost too real. Most effective though is David Daniels'

M/W/Fart videoPRESENTS



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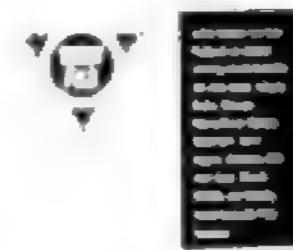
Buzz Box, a dammingly hallucinogenic vision of television and its nefarious devices. Using key media words such as "free" and "credit" to lure your ear, this 15 minute piece employs claymation, computer and video effects to become the best drug-free head trip since *Ariels*, the Subgenius classic of sensory overload. This short should be required viewing for all first-time TV buyers (just to let you know what you're really getting into).

Best of the Fests features two giant cockroach films. The first, *Dr. Ded Bug*, is every NY short order cook's nightmare, featuring gratuitous bug stomping and a confrontation with the mother of all cucarachas. However, the epic scope of Wendell Morris' grimly funny *An Urban Tragedy* edges it out as the better insect romp with

it's ultimate Aqua Net-napalm climax. Other highlights include *No Pain, No Gain*, a weightlifting comedy that's brutally honest about the stresses of pumping iron: "Dead lifts. This is the best exercise for hernias. I've only been doing them for a year and I've already had three." Yes, it's weight training for the rest of us.

Picture Start deserves points for not being cheap as the image and sound quality is very good, unlike many actual festival venues. To anyone who actively seeks out student screenings and those touring animation celebrations, go for it, there's something for everyone.

- D.E.W.

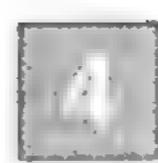


**Best of
the Fests**

1990

IT HIT ME LIKE A SHOT

SCOTT RUSSO'S JIZZ
IS NOW BI-MONTHLY.
AVAILABLE AT A
COMIC SHOP NEAR YOU.



HOT BUTTERED KUNG FU

30 min/Super 8
Victor De Anda Films

Many kung fu movies are unintentionally funny, with awful dubbing or incoherent plots providing a laugh or two. Victor De Anda's *Hot Buttered Kung Fu* comes complete with awful dubbing and incoherent plots but few laughs, which is sad considering that this is supposed to be a comedy.

Billed as a collection of martial arts films, all this tape really contains are several badly edited "trailers" and what's supposed to be the main event, a segment called *Big Toe of Doom*. All the previews do is show that this effort is terrible in any language (one of them is repeated twice, in both English and "Japanese") as well as make *Big Toe of*

Doom actually look decent But not quite.

- G. A.



RUNMAN 69

60 min/Super 8
FUM TREAT VIDEO

If you don't live in Southern California or Hawaii and can't spend your summers there, now you can sit in front of the TV and pretend that it's you out there surfing and hangin' on the beach with the beautiful people on the sunny sands. *Runman 69* is filled with big boards, big breasts, big doobies, big tunes and big surfin' sequences. It also has some charming pit bull attacks on chickens, a guy taking a shit on another guy's car, the ensuing fist fight, and various shots of women's butts with wise-acre voice-over commentary.

Ugliness aside, *Runman 69* is an entertaining slice of life for those that dream of living on the beach with just your board and the waves to sustain you, or anyone who loved the 100% adrenaline of *Point Break*...just kidding. The surfing sequences are as entertaining as any you might expect to see on ESPN, without all the cool close-ups, but there are more laughs in *Runman 69* than your average "documentary." Perhaps the ideal way to watch this film is to loop it and leave it running from June to August (or even longer) to remind you of what you're missing in those cold winter months.

- C.S.



WITCHCRAFT THROUGH THE AGES

70 min/B&W
MPI Home Video

Naked girls! Pagan rites!
Nasty drooling demons! All

this and more from a movie made in 1922! This silent Swedish film was banned worldwide for years. Now, MPI has seen fit to re-release it on video, but this time with narration by the inimitable William S. Burroughs and music by Jean Luc-Ponty. This version is much shorter than the original since most of the title cards are cut out in favor of Big Bill's voiceover. How can you not like a movie that has Burroughs saying things like "Here we see a demon throwing a lost soul directly into the pit of fire?"

The film itself is an odd mixture of early cut-out animation and live action. After a brief, 15 minute history lesson, there follows a series of vignettes depicting different aspects of witchcraft. During all this, there's baby sacrifices, instruments of torture, and, best of all, witches kissing the devil's ass! It's no wonder this was banned. Even today, it would bum out most of the general public. Hurry up and see it before it gets banned again.

- D.P.



KING KONG

1990

23 min/16mm
Eroslove Prods.

I was spellbound.

Director Robert Howard, a self-described "experimental filmmaker from CalArts, but not a flake," has somehow produced what has got to be the most annoying, compelling, grating, seductive...you get the idea.

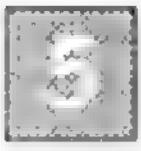
Dispensing with plot, traditional characters and dialogue, Rob has instead gone for pink-tinged mood *a la Eraserhead* by constructing an alternate world of dildo-studded walls, connected-at-the-hair fraternal twins, and

hamburger-tossing, trapeze-flying clowns (who engage in what must be one of the most elaborately choreographed aerial scenes I have ever witnessed).

What has this got to do with King Kong? Nothing, absolutely nothing. But that's the point. What we have here is not a lack of communication, but reception. *King Kong 1990* works at a different frequency, a completely different wavelength than say, *Home Alone*. Which is why I loved it.

One fault though is the vocal soundtrack. Too often, the images are repeated for no other reason than to give the narrator an opportunity to speak or sing, as the case may be.

- D.E.W.



MUTANT MASSACRE

85 min/Video
C.J.S. Films

Some directors consciously construct their films to be perceived as unusual. Weird. Out of the ordinary. On the other hand, there are directors who are weird themselves. Strange. Out of the ordinary. Carl J. Sukenick may be one of these people.

Mutant Massacre is not a normal movie, despite any claim Sukenick may make. In fact, the term that comes to mind when trying to describe the film is "non-sequitur."

Nothing in this film adds up, adheres to the so-called rules of filmmaking, or even the laws of physics for that matter.

So extensive is this departure from the norm, that I really can't either recommend



Titular mutant.

nothing could be further from the truth.

I just wanted to get the bad news out first.

This film has plenty going for it. Set at a drunken party, the wandering story follows

or slag this radioactive mutant-on-the-loose film. The writing, acting and camera work is dreadful—but it works. The editing and direction is nonsensical and illogical—but it works. Unlike *King Kong 1990* (see above), *Mutant Massacre* never hides behind the "art-film" disclaimer, making it that much more honest...and strange. Meanwhile, Sukenick is working on *Mutant Massacre II*. I can only wonder.

- D.E.W.

A SHORT FILM ABOUT BOWLING

38 min/16mm
Nomad Prods.

Director Brad Anderson's short description of this film is this: "The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom."

Apparently, Mr. Anderson didn't want to ruin the surprises.

Although gloomy masturbation, power vomiting, evangelical drug abuse, gratuitous hand-thrusting-in-toilet action, and self-flagellation are some of my favorite on-screen activities, *Bowling*'s less-than-zany visual style tends to dull the action with a few unnecessarily drawn-out scenes. While this statement may appear to be some sort of death knell,



High-wire weirdness in KING KONG 1990.

the misadventures of several characters as they attempt to survive the evening: a psychotic attempting to rescue her favorite crucifix from a puke-filled toilet; a college boy distraught by impotence; a one-eyed, Elmer Gantry-like coke fiend with a donut fixation; and a homeless tequila-lover facing a worm shortage. Flipping from character to character in rapid succession, *Bowling* almost feels like being at a real party—where one might stumble drunkenly from room to room and pick up fragments of what's going on. (Not that I've ever done that.) Adding to this hallucinogenic atmosphere is the clever use of camera and sound effects, both of which make a certain fondue fork duel stand out in my mind.

- D.E.W.

VIDEOPHILE

1-2 hrs each/Video
Videophile Prods

A Ft. Worth, Texas-based video magazine (for people who hate to read), *Videophile* has a collection of 23 tapes

that focus on various themes, concert events or short film collections. Well-produced with psychedelic (but not annoyingly so) video effects and effective editing, these "dokuments" are great entertainment. Out of the several tapes sent for review, two of them really stand out.

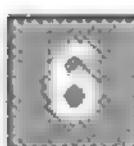
#2 *Laibach In Dallas* — Behind a chain link fence, the thrash-meets-metal band Laibach churns through a great set, opening with a Stones cover that defies comparison as unrelenting grunge substitutes for seemless pop. Not your typical MTV shit, this house rocks with pure noise.

#8 *Death Infinity* — Opening with a cool montage of death imagery, featuring some nasty accident victim footage, a brutal rodeo clown accident, and the Videophile mascot, "Skullfuck," this one features a cool segment on the art of serial killers John Wayne Gacy and Henry Lee Lucas, including a dealer's appraisal of their respective work (and how its value will go up if the artists' respective

death sentences are carried out).

Though impossible to encapsulate, these tapes make good on the promise of offering alternative music and high quality video mayhem.

- D.E.W.

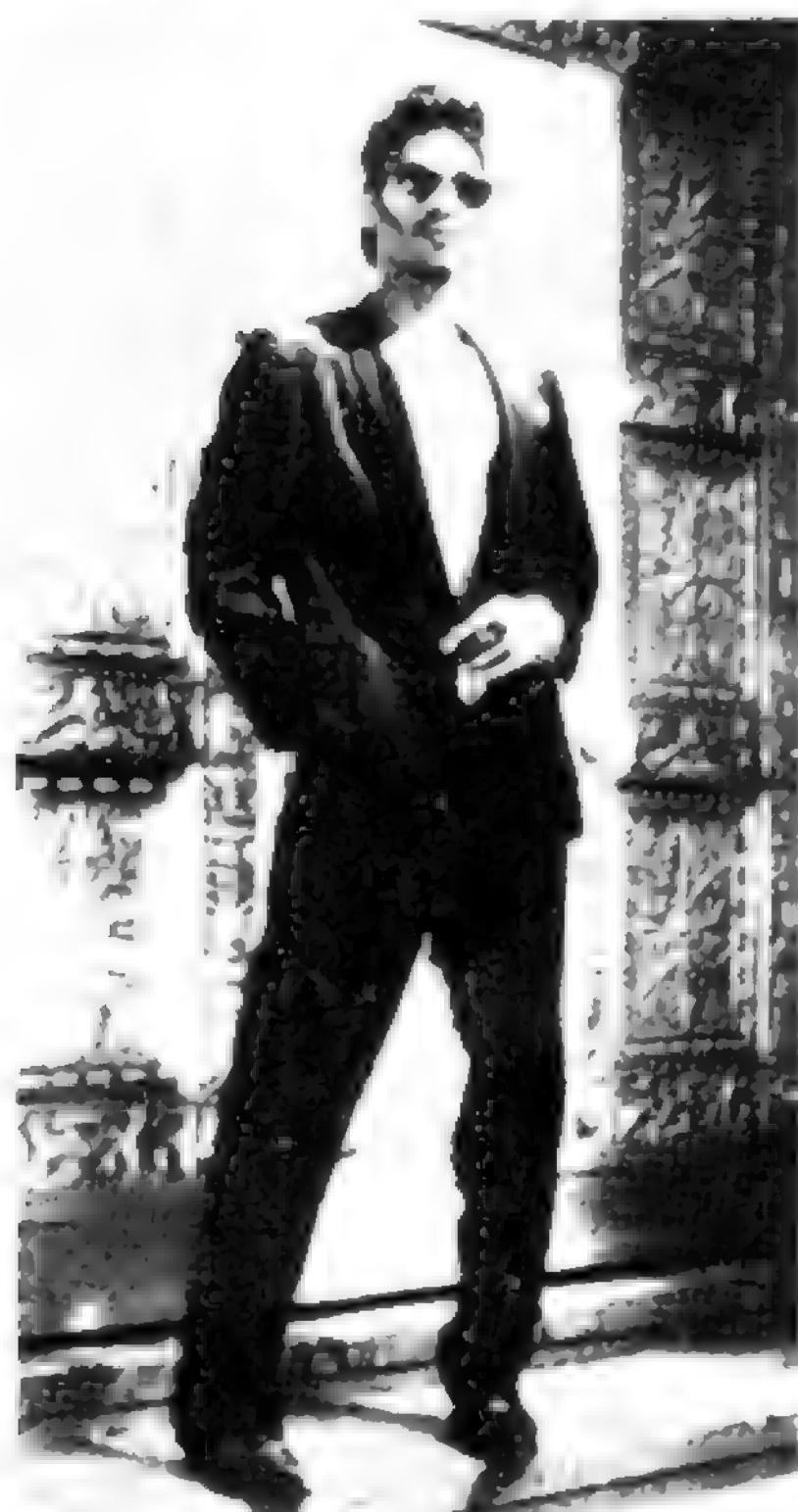


THE FRANKIE LYMON'S NEPHEW STORY

39 min/video

Fashion Object Prods.

What makes a semi-legend best? Well, probably a tale like this. Frankie Lymon is the coolest nightclub crooner to grace Manhattan's finest venues since Sinatra swooned them back in '56. A graceful cat in a leopard print jacket and hip-hugging derrière enhancers, Frankie dances, prances and jives into your heart—only to fall prey to the ills of stardom and nose-dive into the cruel world of drugs and obscurity. Played by Mr. Fashion, the Frankie character



Mr. Fashion Is Frankie Lymon

is classic camp, but with Jacob Burckhardt's direction, he becomes a bit darker. This film seemed at first to be more of a comedy, but the somber scenes of Frankie in the depths of his controlled substances dilemma becomes a bit too real, a mood heightened by the production's seedy realism and harsh video glare. He just said YES, and we get to watch. Fortunately though, the silliness resumes with a heightened pitch that will put at least a smirk on the most jaded lips. And Frankie is sooooo cooooooool.

- R.Y.



STEPS FROM HELL

75 min/Super 8

Horrorion Cinema Productions

This film is about an "immortal psychopath," two female zombies, and a map which leads to the titular staircase. An interesting premise, but it goes downhill from there. The music is dark and moody, but an obvious precursor to a Jason/Michael Meyers chase scene. The gore is weak and the killer looks more like a Columbian drug lord from *Miami Vice* (or a deposed Panamanian strongman) than an immortal being whose mission is to find this secret gateway.

Though technically excellent and well edited, several things get in the way of this being a good horror flick: not enough gore, unimaginative death scenes, and one of the female zombies being a drag queen. (No shit!) This is another film that has



Impressive effects in NECROMANIA.

many of the right elements and plenty of know-how, but fails on the storytelling level, making it confusing and muddled rather than suspenseful or scary.

- R.Y.



NECROMANIA

18 min/16mm

&



DUNGEON

8 min/Super 8

Highham's House of Horrors Prods.

Not to be confused with Jorg Buttgereit's *Nekromantik*, *Necromania* is technically sound, with a decent plot and competent direction. Above all else, however, the special effects carry this horror tale. Director George Highham deserves credit for presenting not only great effects, but for also properly utilizing them so that he doesn't overdo it. The story, which is simple but interesting, involves a modern day witch named Lamia (well played by Mavis

Harris) who resurrects a corpse with disastrous results.

However, the film's time constraint prevents any real tension from being established. Thus, *Necromania* (whose title suggests a more outrageous and hellish film) is relatively tame with the gore kept to a minimum and no scares whatsoever. Perhaps this is why the film starts off with the look of an impressive feature and quickly adopts the feeling of a standard television thriller, complete with the trademark twist ending.

The more inspired short, *Dungeon*, another Highham effort, is much more gruesome and fun. Despite minor flaws, this tale about a man who is chained to a dungeon wall and confronted by an evil sorcerer is amusing. The use of classical music is surprisingly effective, giving this short a spirited feel. A few scenes in *Dungeon* are reminiscent of early Sam Raimi, which makes me wish that this eight minute flash were longer.

- G.A.

6

BADHAM!38 min/B&W and
Color/Super 8

&

GILLIGAN'S ILL23 min/B&W and
Color/Super 8

Bizarre World Productions

Badbam! is the tale of a murdered pig's rise from the grave and the subsequent revenge against those who eat his kind. Unfortunately, the film doesn't fully capitalize on the promising premise of a vengeful porker on the loose. In fact, the idea itself is never developed, just grinded to the ground. So what you get are some effective scenes of carnage as Badham makes his victims pay. Such scenes, accompanied by some hideously screeching, but somewhat appealing music, are good for a cheap laugh. But, that's all folks. The rest deals with some character who bears an eerie resemblance to a mentally unstable Sinead O'Connor. Her presence, aside from disturbing, helps slow the action considerably. In the end, *Badbam!* will leave your stomach queasy.

Never mind how the castaways of *Gilligan's Island* survived deadly diseases, turbulent weather and a coconut and banana diet. How did they manage to live without sex? I mean Ginger always seemed horny, but you never saw any wild orgies on the uncharted desert isle. Well, *Gilligan's Ill* lays down the truth of what really happened. Gilligan's masturbation problem is revealed once and for all as well as other sordid details.

The concept of blending actual television footage (with permission, I assume?) and filmmaker Chris Simons' own demented scenes often succeeds with hilarious results.

However, after you see some wickedly funny scenes (wicked meaning you find extreme close-ups of somebody's diarrhea-infested asshole funny) you expect more. Instead, you get stuck with genuine Dole pineapple commercials. Admittedly, the commercials are a nice touch, but so many?

Despite being awkwardly paced, *Gilligan's Ill* will make you laugh, but you'll be left with a feeling that this could have been so much better.

—G.A.

5

GORGASM80 min/Video
FILM THREAT VIDEO

Cool title.

The story deals with a chick who places an ad offering "the ultimate climax." When she gets a customer, she ties him up and kills him. One guy gets a weed-whacker to the face; one gets his throat slit; and, in an inventive death, one unlucky dude gets his head pulled off by an electric garage door opener. Meanwhile, a geek of a cop (Rik Billock), who desperately wants to be a homicide detective, is given the opportunity to prove himself by catching the killer. Good luck. This dick is so stupid, he has to have the term S&M explained to him. When he finally understands, his reaction is, "That's disgusting."

During all this nonsense, there's a ton of extremely original dialog like, "Living is hard. It's dying that's easy," to go along with the laughable "acting." The direction of Hugh Gallagher (publisher of *Dracula* magazine) is semi-okay, but the gore effects are right out of a sixth grade science project. Even *Fangoria* nerds would laugh at

Drawing blood and defying gravity in **GORGASM**.

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10 YEARS FROM Now, You Might Read About This Film In: *Psychotronic*



Marion (Corey Parker) gives professional wrestling (in the person of Queen Kong) a spin to impress the admissions committee, in director Savage Steve Holland's 1989 Twentieth Century Fox comedy disaster, *How I Got Into College*. •

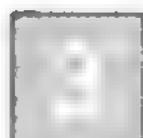
this one.

The only redeeming thing in this whole mess is that the killer (played by Gabriela, an *Easy Rider* centerfold) walks around the entire video half-naked. But hey, if you want to see great tits, rent a Christy Canyon video.

- D.P.

STREET MUTANTS BEWARE

75 min/Video
Angel Concepts



A technical atrocity about the Guardian Angels, the self-appointed watch group of the streets, this is not some slick documentary profiling the organization, but a horribly

shot home video. Made by some would-be vigilante living in Texas, who seems to be searching for his fifteen minutes of fame by sending FTVG a tape of his training session with the Angels, this may have been interesting if it hadn't been so mind-numbingly dull. The tape manages to provide some worthwhile moments of Angel leader Lisa Sliwa demonstrating various self-defense techniques, with her sense of humor easing the video's pointlessness.

- G.A.

12 O' CLOCK HIGH VOLUME II

60 min/Color and B&W
Atavistic Video



Unless you like any or all of the following bands: The Flaming Lips, Bad Brains, Babes in Toyland, Foetus Inc., David Atherton, Thin White Rope, Afghan Wigs, Halo of Flies, Buffalo Tom, Big Trouble House, Bonegater, Adrienne Altenhaus, and Lee Ranaldo, you should move on to the next review.

Now, for those of you who are musically correct, here's the scoop. Some of these videos are really cool; some are okay; and some of them truly suck. Altogether, it's pretty hit and miss. It's hard to dislike this, but I really can't recommend it either (and I like almost every band on it). I'd say that if you're gonna spend the bucks, pick up *Dope, Guns & Fucking Up Your Video Deck*, which is also available from Atavistic Video. I wish I could be more specific, but what's the point? This is just one of those things that you already know you're gonna love or hate, so it really doesn't matter what I think.

- D.P.

CULT PEOPLE

60 min/Video
Lost Angel

This compilation of interviews with various cult-status figures is an entertaining way to waste an hour. Host David Del Valle does a good job of providing the viewer with some background information on each guest and refrains from getting overly sappy. The group of interviewees includes: Cameron Mitchell, Waris Hussein, Michael Sarne, James Karen, Russ Meyer, Curtis Harrington and Patrick MacNee. *Cult People* does suffer from the fact that there is not enough time spent with each individual

and unfortunately you are left with only a taste of what generally are solid interviews. Still, even if you have never heard of some of these people you will find their stories fascinating.

- G.A.

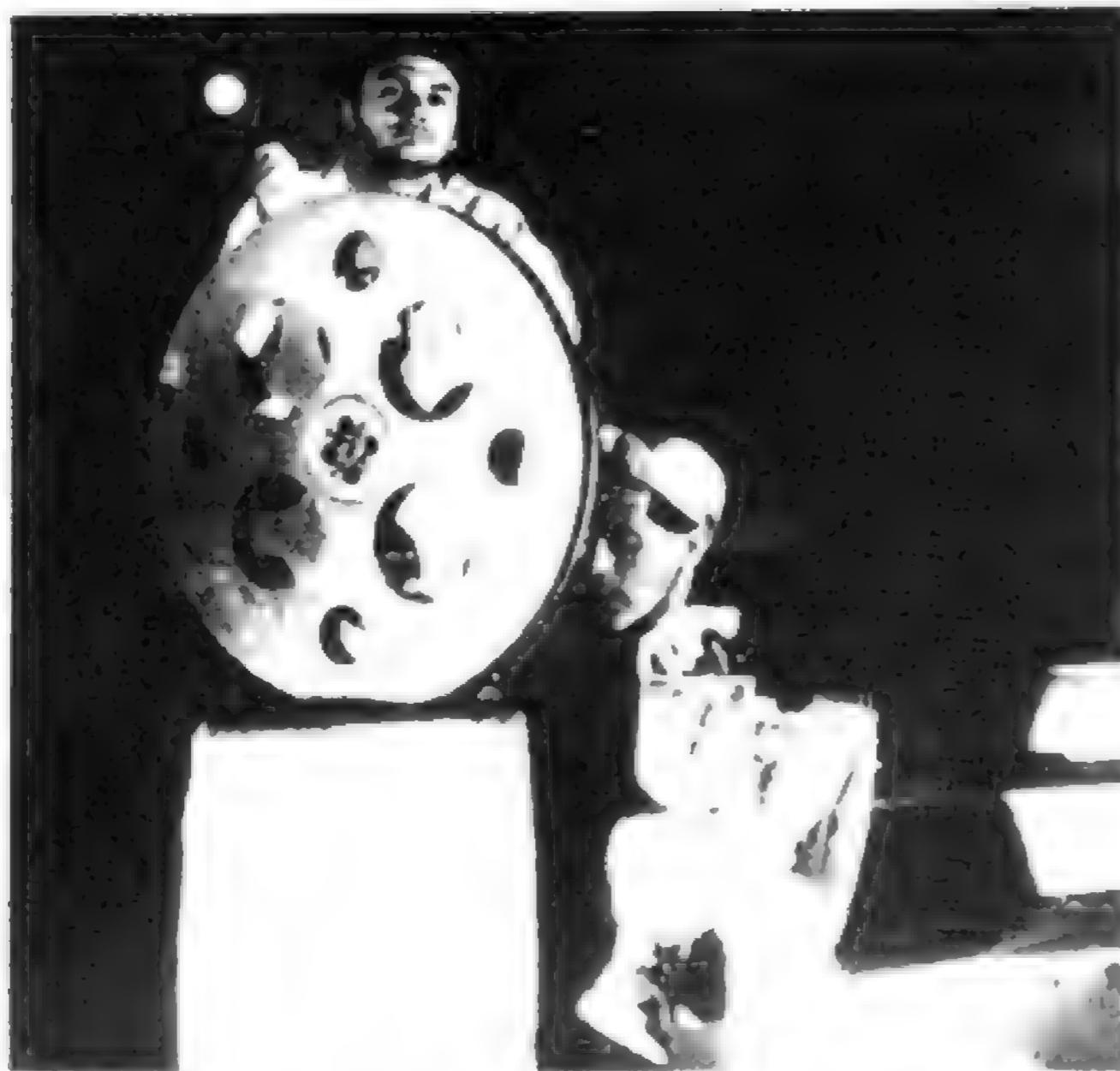
ROME '78

90 min/Super 8
Monday/Wednesday/
Friday Video Club

James Nares' small format epic has been widely praised by numerous critics, and stars such so-called "punk and no-wave scenesters" as David McDermott, Eric Mitchell and Lydia Lunch.

This 1978 film, loosely based on Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* and deeply influenced by the underground film movement of the 60s, stars McDermott as the ranting Caesar, an annoying self-centered ruler on the brink of insanity. Mitchell's ambitious Metellus has had enough of the emperor's childish fits and seeks to remove him from power.

Rome '78's mood is captured best in the words of Mitchell's Metellus as he tells a potential conspirator of his motive for killing Caesar: "Look, he's crazy and I can't stand it." Director Nares presents the dialogue-loaded action in a deliberately pretentious manner which means stomaching the at-times nonsensical bullshit on screen can be difficult. Yet the charismatic presence of Mitchell and Lunch engages the viewer in a manner that one would not suspect. Off-hand remarks by the cast lend a sense of mutual playfulness. For example, Mitchell, convincing a fellow Roman he means him no harm by saying: "C'mon, I won't kill you. I like you a lot." Another



(L): Brother George & Professor Tread are BRAINS ON FILM; (R) Getting Into the mind In FUTURE PERFECT.

aspect that works well is the film's editing, which incorporates brief shots of what appear to be mistakes as well as staged antics. This gives *Rome '78* a strange self-reflexive appeal, as if you are being let in on some inside joke.

- G.A.

5 BRAINS ON FILM

30 min/Public Access
TeleCable Lexington

Take-offs on film review shows are sometimes funny (see Robert Townsend's *Hollywood Shuffle*), but *Brains on Film* isn't nearly as successful.

While it's great that the *Brains on Film* duo, George Maranville and Larry Treadway, have the balls to attempt satire on public access television (a venue that doesn't lend well to much beyond cheesy talk-show B.S.), it seems that they rely too heavily on the corn-pone antics pioneered by Joe Bob Briggs than real humor. Claiming to battle the "commercial pap" of mainstream film by championing B-

movies (leading me to assume they are charter *Psychotronic* subscribers), Brother George and Professor Tread (their witty stage names), sent us an episode entitled "Butt-Loads of Backwoods Buffoonery," which consisted of them acting like Siskel & Ebert's trailer-park cousins in between clips from the film *Poor White Trash Part 2*. Only kinda funny, but I'd encourage everyone to support these guys by writing to *Brains On Film*, PO Box 1337, Lexington, KY, 40590.

- D.E.W.

7 THE ANGELIC CONVERSATION

80 min/Film & Video
Mystic Fire Video

This one can go either way depending mainly on whether you can go either way. This is to say that *The Angelic Conversation*, a film by Derek Jarman, is a visually captivating and technically superior effort that deals exclusively with homoerotic themes. So, if you don't mind an all-male cast gazing at each other endlessly as well as par-

ticipating in some strenuous physical activity (by themselves and with each other) then you might be engrossed by Jarman's fantasy-soaked imagery.

The stop-motion photography, trance-like music by Coil and voice-over Shakespearean Sonnets read by Judi Dench result in an art film that has the tendency to stretch both the eye and mind's limits with prolonged glamour shots of the male form. The dreamlike quality of *The Angelic Conversation* is so well done that the film easily and quickly leads to boredom, especially if you're not too crazy about the subject matter.

- G.A.

7 FUTURE PERFECT

52 min/16mm
B+G Prods.

While I've heard a lot of talk about the technology of "virtual reality," this is the first indie film I've seen (other than *Total Recall*, which was the most expensive indie ever made and sucked), that attempts to harness this concept into some kind of cohe-

sive story. Fortunately, *Future Perfect* lives up to its packaging, which warns, "CAUTION, this film may be too strange for some people." And it is.

Complete with some interesting twists and inventive video/computer effects, this "ultimate stoner film" manages to capture the out-of-space experience of the virtual reality concept without getting bogged down by logical, scientific, boring explanations.

- R.Y.

THE TOXIC KID-BEACH PARTY BLOOD BATH PART 2

34 min./Video
No-Money Enterprises

First of all, is this really a sequel or do I not get the joke? Well, I'm thinking that most of you will get the dumb jokes in this one and that you won't laugh. It's all about some guy in a gas mask and raincoat named the Toxic Kid who is searching for his child which some woman

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gave birth to after being raped by the mutant. The mother, who died during the birthing, left the child with her sister, who now with the help of a nerdy police sergeant, must protect the offspring from the charred and lumpy father. Writer/producer/director Dave Palamaro has structured his short movie in a competent manner and it doesn't look that bad for being shot on video. But not enough gags pay off, which leaves the audience feeling lucky they missed part one (if indeed it was ever made).

- G.A.

WORLD WIDE MAGAZINE

"It's a Madhouse"/"Throw Out Show"
both 60 min/Video
&
"Who's Fred Willard?"/
"Everybody's Elvis"
48 min/28 min/Video

As I watched this all I kept thinking was that this is really lame. But being so pathetically optimistic I hoped it would get better. Not a chance. This St. Louis-based public access show is the brainchild of Peter Parisi, a host with a defined style, albeit one of a whiny-voiced, middle-aged goof. The first segment presents a series of interviews with souls from the fringes of society. Not quite. What you get are Bible-thumpers protesting Scorsese's *Last Temptation*, some elderly idiot spewing rhetoric about how great Hitler was and other nobodies who I can't even remember now and I watched this the night before I wrote this review.

The second installment suffers from *Roger & Me*-itis as it chronicles the times Parisi and his crew were kicked out of places. Locations vary from

conventions and state fairs. Essentially, the confrontations are pretty tame and the spots they're run out of are really ordinary. Wow, I really feel sorry for cable viewers in St. Louis.

The second volume of *WWM* is more of a specialty tape. How excited you'll get depends on how much TV personality Fred Willard and dead icon Elvis Presley turn you on

- G.A.

F.A.R.T.-THE MOVIE

97 min/Video

Wavelength Video

The title of this film has a definite impact. With part apprehension and part sick curiosity you prepare yourself for a picture exclusively about gastrous expulsion. As you can guess, any movie that strains to make you laugh for over an hour and half by making jokes about farting will invariably lead to a pile of shit. And what a pile of shit we have here. This one-joke premise simply dies after about the first minute, a serious problem that should be avoided when making a feature. The result is a video that feels like a porno except it doesn't have any explicit sex—instead it contains idiotic jokes and deadly vapors.

- G.A.

HEAVEN'S DESCENT

8 min/Film

Ultimately, the only word to describe *Heaven's Descent* is boring. Filmmaker M. Fletcher has wasted the time and effort (not to mention the 16mm film) in order to make this dull short. It deals with some guy waking up (or is it falling asleep?) and the altered

visions he encounters. There's an excess of extreme close-ups, focusing on such stimulating subject matter as tree branches and bark. The nonsensical narrative that drones throughout doesn't help matters much. *Heaven's Descent* leads straight to hell, but unfortunately the eight minute excursion seems almost eternal.

- G.A.

ZINES Reviews By D.E.W.

VIDEOOZE

\$3 Each/\$10 sub [4 issues]
PO Box 9911
Alexandria, VA 22304
Editor-Bob Sargent

When I first found issue #2 of this 'zine in my mail box, I immediately threw it in the corner for future disposal. Interestingly, this mag somehow found its way to my

desk and stayed there, unread, for about two weeks. I guess I just dreaded the cover story on Filipino vampire movies. But I did read it. Devoted to obscure horror, this simplistically constructed paean to dubbed/B-grade schlock is well researched and literate—but ultimately pointless unless the reader barks at the moon whenever a Robert Quarry or Paul Naschy film is mentioned in their presence.

SCOTT RUSSO'S JIZZ

\$2.50 pp each
Fantagraphics Books
7563 Lake City Way NE
Seattle, WA 98115

Editor/Artist-Scott Russo
PO Box 229
Brooklyn, NY 11228

A welcomed breath of foul air, *Jizz* is quite possibly the angriest, most biting comic book I've ever seen with a glossy color cover. Genuinely pissed off, frustrated and con-

fused by his New York existence, Scott Russo bypasses such niceties as allegory and allusion to thrust headlong (and viciously) into such rich targets as racism, sexism and religion. *A la Harvey Pekar*, Russo uses personal experience to illustrate these horrors of everyday life and express his own rage and powerlessness.

However, as *Jizz* also contains satire pertaining to AIDS, feminists, and virtually every ethnicity, I expect some people will carelessly brand this book as hate literature. This is not the case. As did Mel Brook's film *Blazing Saddles*, *Jizz* does teeter on the edge, but remains clear about its intention: attacking hate and stupidity with biting humor and blunt honesty.

Most interesting is Russo's use of self-deprecating humor, which prevents his work from becoming a pretentious rant.

HEADPRESS

PO Box 160
Stockport, Cheshire
SK1 4ET, United Kingdom
£3.50 each pp
Sub [4 issues] £17.00pp
Editor: David Kerekes

While describing itself as a "white knuckle ride through the last days of modern civilization" may be a bit premature, *Headpress* is indeed a very impressive piece of work. Neither a fan-zine nor a pro-zine, this premiere issue featured such items as Alejandro Jodorowsky's *Santa Sangre*, a report on an attempt to get Jorg Buttgereit's film *Der Todesking* past the notoriously sensitive English censors, and a feature story on sadomasochism from a female enthusiast's perspective. In all, *Headpress* is an excellent publication that deserves to survive. Hopefully, they will.

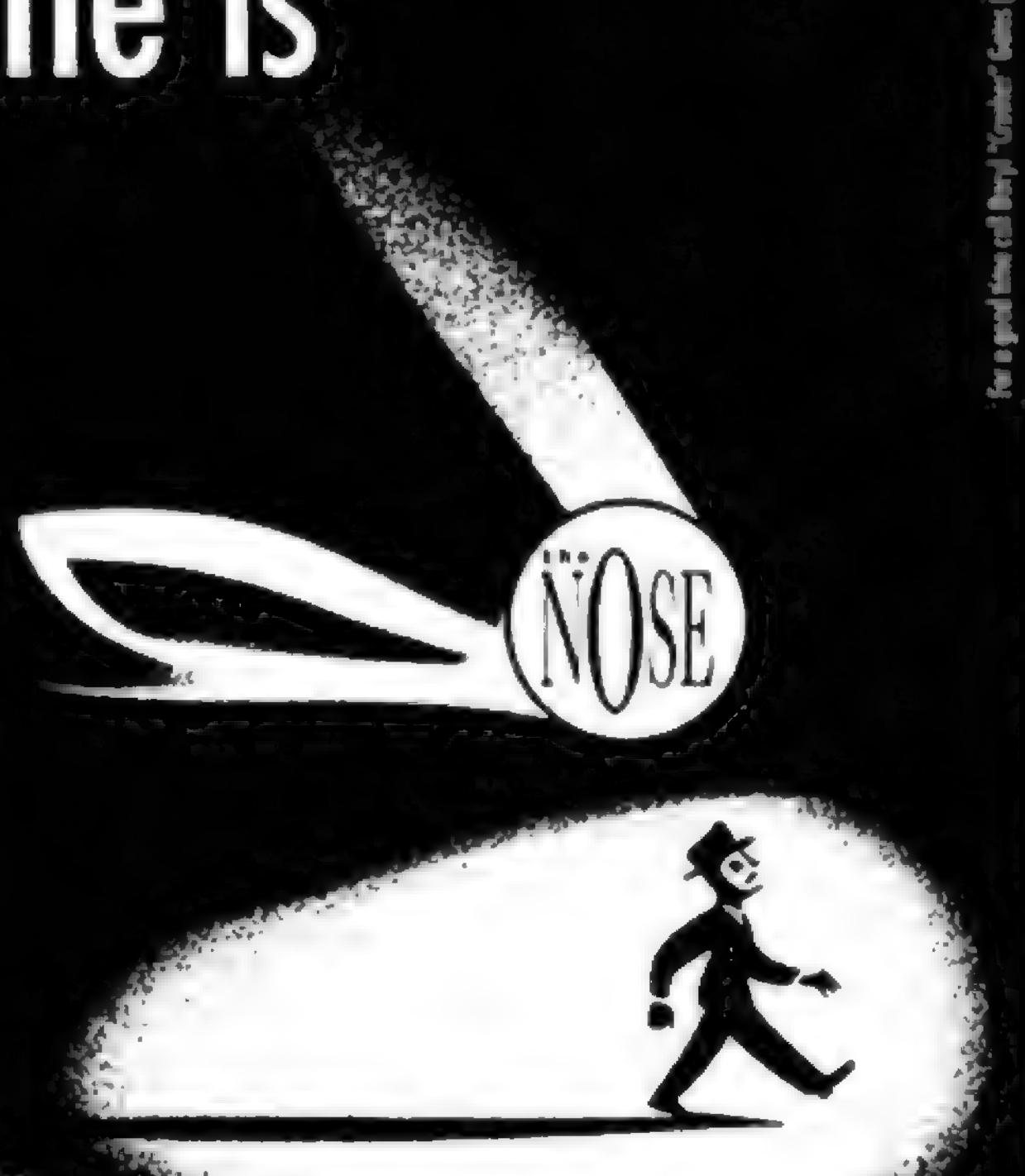
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FILM THREAT SCAN LINES

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RIF COOGAN, the low-budget writer/director responsible for **THE INVISIBLE MANIAC**, found himself in uncharted territory after a close friend offered him a videotape of **GUINEA PIG**, a film of Asian origin that is rumored to contain actual "snuff" action, i.e. a real murder perpetrated solely for the entertainment of the demented viewer. Though repelled by the concept, COOGAN had his doubts about the film's authenticity and watched it in the company of close friend,

CHARLIE SHEEN. Both were horrified to find they could not convincingly explain how such grisly "special effects" could be done, prompting the shocked Sheen to call the Federal Bureau of Investigation. They were informed by Special Agent **DAN CODLING** that the FBI and their Japanese counterparts were already involved in the case and asked to please relinquish the suspicious cassette. They did. Further legwork determined that

CHAS. BALUN, editor of the authoritative horror magazine *Deep Red*, was partially responsible for the film's underground distribution. Balun fiercely contended that the film was not real, and the systematic dismemberment that served as **GUINEA PIG**'s highlight was simply a series of astounding effects. Fortunately for him, BALUN was soon proved correct by FBI experts, though a short trailer at the end of the tape is still suspect.

COOGAN and SHEEN were both commended by Special Agent CODLING for their civic-minded responsiveness to the situation.

The tape was described by one source as "some drugged-out girl cut up with a hocksaw, it looked pretty fake to me."

RON STONE, manager of singer **BELINDA CARLISLE** recently commented [in a local newspaper] on the legendary behind-the-scenes **GO-GO**'s videotape profiled in FT #22, "It was a very long time ago. I don't think it was as provocative as it is being represented. But we certainly don't condone [the sale of] it in any way." Shoving a vibrator up the ass of a drugged-out roadie isn't provocative? We think STONE's been in LA too long.

Apparently, the editorship of *Fangoria* magazine isn't the powerful throne we'd like to believe it to be. Editor **TONY TIMPONE**, approached by FTVG staffers for press passes to the recent LA edition of the *Fangoria Weekend of Horrors* convention, begged off claiming "I'd like

to help you guys but I can't get anybody else in." Fortunately, our friend **TOM SAVINI** managed to weasel the free passes. The festival? Well, any chance to hang out with **LEATHERFACE: TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE III** director **JEFF BURR** and watch Fang-fans suck up to him for autographs is entertainment to us. (Thanks for the drink, Jeff! I owe ya one!)

BURR is currently helming **EDDIE PRESLEY**, an indie comedy feature about a security guard cum Elvis devotee looking for his big break. Produced by brother **BILL BURR**, the picture is being shot in Los Angeles under the most guerrilla of filmmaking conditions and will feature cameos by **LAWRENCE TIERNEY** and **KITTEN NATIVIDAD**.

- Roudy Yates

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FEATURE



FACADES OF THE RICH & DANGEROUSLY INBRED

Our loyal man in Dallas makes a jaunt to the USA Film Festival a la gonzo.

by Paul T. Riddell

Photos by Rod Woodruff and Paul Mearns

IT'S ALWAYS BEEN A belief of mine that most cities resemble a particular film in one way or another. Thus, I tend to see New York in *King Kong*, Seattle in *Blade Runner*, Chicago in *The Sting*, Salt Lake City in *The Handmaid's Tale*, and Lewisville, Texas in *Deliverance*. Using this logic, what do I see in my hometown of Dallas? *Dawn of the Dead*. Zombies in shopping malls.

Dallas is a funny city. One that can afford to spend more on busting street people for collecting cans but can't afford to buy new schoolbooks for its kids. A town that wants to call itself an international city but has a police force straight out of Sheepdip, Georgia. A town that shows the follies of giving rednecks money: the rich

here spend millions on their trappings without realizing that all they're buying are ornate velvet Elvises and lawn flamingos. A town that lives up to its TV namesake by proving that Oklahomans with fortunes are still piss in the gene pool.

To stave off this image, rich Dallasites spend literal fortunes on "arts districts" that no real artist could afford to enter (while developers destroy the Deep Ellum area, formerly the home of what little counterculture we still had left), symphonies that nobody can afford to attend, and events like the USA Film Festival. Not that the Festival itself is all that bad, but primarily services the folks who think that *Blue Velvet* and *Rocky Horror* are the epitome of "alternative" film.

Anyway, this tale starts last March, when I volunteered to cover the festival knowing full well the reputation of FTVG had preceded me. I sent off a nice letter, along with a copy of the GUIDE to Pam Proctor, head of publicity, and expected to hear unintelligible choking sounds when next I called. No, instead of cries of "Begone, foul spirit!" I got a short but nice letter back, saying "I'm not quite sure what story angle you are pursuing, for many of these films do not have distributors much less video deals."

Ah, lambs to the slaughter.

Obviously, someone didn't bother to look past the front cover, and I can't be responsible for people who don't read. I prepared for the occasion by studying examples of proper conduct at such functions (I must've read *Fear and*

Loathing in Las Vegas five times, straight through), and then hopped into the Doonsebuggy (complete with the "Churches don't burn down by themselves; you have to help. Learn to burn."

bumper-sticker to offend the Jesus people attending) and bestirred my ass over to the General Cinema North Park for the opening of the Festival.

Silly as it sounds, I actually had a few high hopes for the Fest. True, anything approaching the avant garde was compared to something David Lynch had done, but I saw a few gems that received high kudos in Europe (the Brian Yuzna film *Society* was a case in point). However, the greatest kick to my bullshit meter came when I discovered the choice for the Great Filmmaker award.

Yep, the Festival committee decided, in lieu of spending money on a real guest of honor, that they would honor a filmmaker who happened to be in the area at the time. Now this procedure offers real hope for the terminally deranged (anyone want to get Russ Meyer or George Romero into Dallas next spring?), and last year's Fest was enlivened by the presence of Dennis Hopper, who had just started work on *The Hot Spot*, but this year, the only man qualified was...

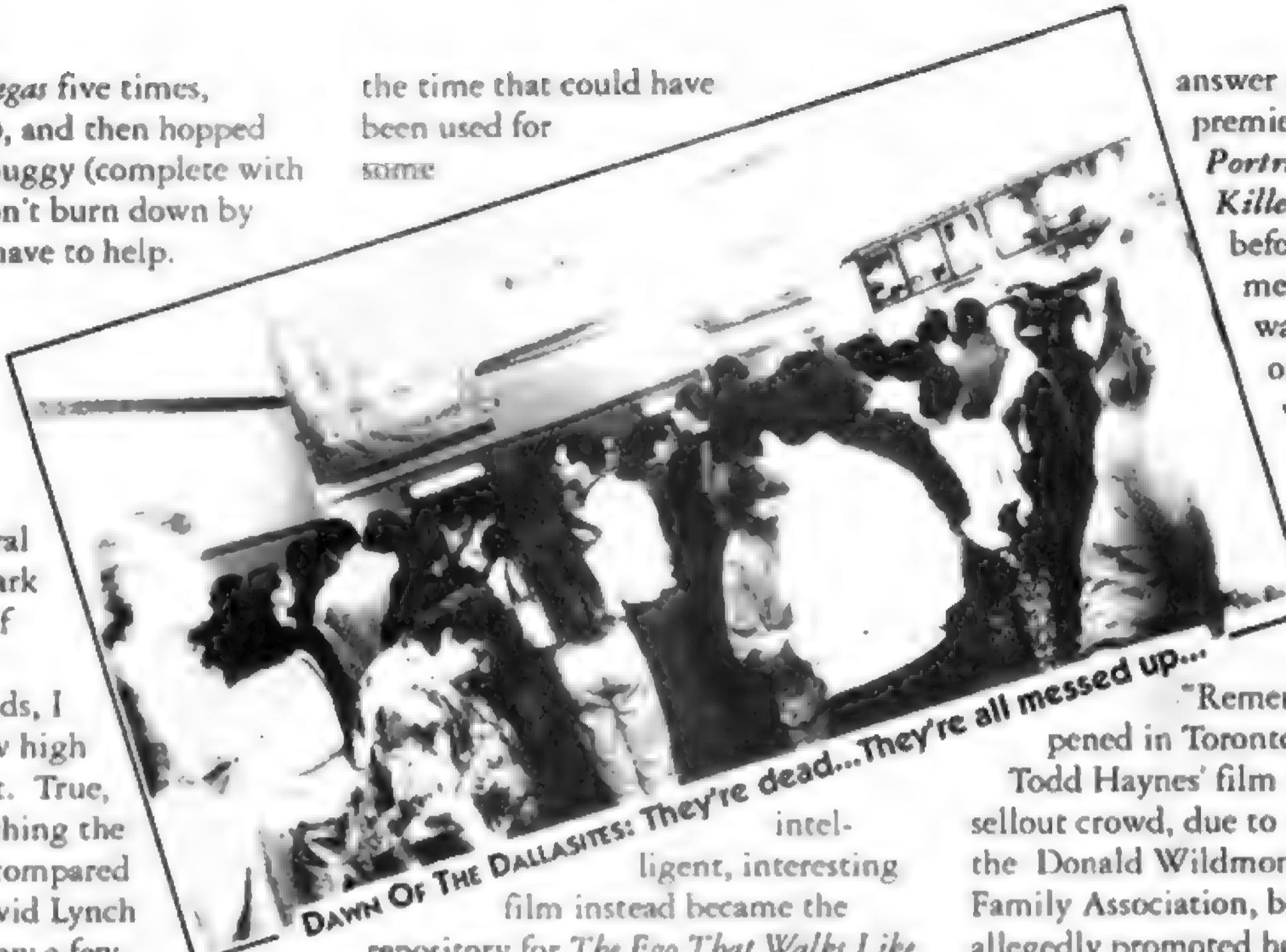
Oliver Stone.

Oliver "Give Me the Sixth Floor of the Texas School Book Depository or I'll Pull the JFK Movie Out of Dallas" Stone. King of the Pig People. The man who had that gap between his teeth artificially widened so that people would mistake him for Michael Ovitz.

Let us all bow our heads for a moment of projectile regurgitation.

Now even this wasn't so bad, but then the programmers got the idea into their fool heads that we needed a retrospective of Ollie's work (mysteriously missing *Conan the Barbarian* and *The Hand*). Thus,

the time that could have been used for some



intelligent, interesting film instead became the repository for *The Ego That Walks Like A Man's Greatest Hits*. By this time, I'd taken so much cyanide I'd built up a tolerance, so I went fog-induced by freebasing Preparation H, feeling neurons exploding like popcorn in much the same way they do when I talk to *Star Trek* addicts.

answer session after the premiere of *Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer* the year before), but his grin melted like cheap wax when he found out who I was with. "Well, at least you don't have to crash us here," he muttered, giving Pam a quick whispered

"Remember what happened in Toronto!?"

Todd Haynes' film *Poison* drew a sellout crowd, due to the screams of the Donald Wildmon-run American Family Association, because the film allegedly promoted homosexuality. *Last Temptation of Christ*-time again. When are these fuckers going to learn that threats of boycotts are only going to draw the Unwashed Masses out in droves to experience the perversions they're trying to protect us from? (Not that it mattered; *Poison* was so boring that the only



The first day started nicely enough with the premiere of *Ballad of the Sad Cafe*, but the tension lay thick on the Fest workers; due not to the perception of audience response, but how a reporter for FTVG had managed to wrangle an invite. I'd come dressed in my usual manner (dress for success or cheap thrills, I always say...), so Artistic Director Richard Peterson recognized me (I'd dominated a question-and-

saving point was a mental picture of Wildmon and Jerry Falwell buggering each other, screaming about how others couldn't be allowed to think homosexuality was good). Likewise, the screening of *Born on the Fourth July* was packed with yahoos wanting to see Stone accept his award. My friend, Rod Woodruff and I ran into Ollie coming out of the john, and Rod

lamented about how he missed the opportunity to get a shot of Stone on the can. He wanted to caption the photo "Proof that not all of Oliver Stone's shit ends up on the screen," but I would've labeled it "Ollie Stone inhaling deeply, trying to convince himself that he was smelling lilac and jasmine."

Anyway, here are the highlights of a very weird Fest:

SOCIETY

This movie blew audiences in Europe away but premiered in the States at the Fest. It's a nice metaphor for the Bush Administration: the filthy rich are really a separate species, able to mould their bodies into whatever floats their grubby little boats. They drive nice cars, hold gigantic parties, and indulge in massive orgies where the lines between one body and another kinda meld. Directed by Brian Yuzna (*Bride of Re-Animator*) and special effects work by Screaming Mad George, this is one film that deserves an American release.

NINTH LIFE

This film is an interesting tale of love, lust, and murder, set in the Deep Ellum district of Dallas. While some of the acting is a bit stiff, it still does a good job at presenting the mania during the years

between 1984 and '89, when artists and musicians grew like mushrooms and stayed in Dallas rather than fleeing to Austin or LA.

Ah, those were the days, before the yup-



would have been different.

GUYVER

One of the Fest's showstoppers, this is the directorial debut of Screaming Mad George, and man, it moves!

The Zoanoids (led by

Screaming Mad George's GUYVER

actor

David Gale of *Re-Animator* and *Bride of same*) lose an enigmatic artifact simply known as the Guyver, which becomes the ultimate armor, increasing the user's abilities a thousandfold. Our poor hero gets his mitts on it, and then gets into one battle after another to keep it from the Zoanoids. Hey, any film that transforms Mark Hamill into a giant ant, Jimmy Walker into a mutant frilled lizard, and Jeffrey Combs (as "Dr. East") into a living astrological sign can't be all bad. This film is everything *Batman* wasn't, need I say more?

We'll be back next year, if only because life is boring around here unless one livens things up with a bit of controversy. **TNG**

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THE KING OF DEATH

*Berlin-based corpse-monger/filmmaker
JORG BUTTGEREIT spills his guts.*

Interview by David Kerekes



Buttgereit and friend.

THERE IS A SCENE IN
Jorg Buttgereit's [pronounced
BOOT-GO-RET] latest film *Der
Todesking* wherein a chain letter is
randomly left outside an apartment
door:

We are losing our life with joy. This is a final word after a long struggle to the end. When you receive this we are already dead and we want you to commit suicide...the only safe and sure thing about life is death. In six days, God created heaven and earth and on the seventh day he committed suicide. Let us die. A happy message from the Brotherhood of the Seventh Day.

Opposite: One of the startling final images from *DER TODESKING*

This is one of the bizarre new ideas from the filmmaker behind the legendary, German cult-classic *Nekromantik*. A movie of set-pieces, *Der Todesking* has no central characters as such—with suicide acting as a stimuli for each segment. Divided into the days of the week, each part can be viewed independently of one another in any order or, of course, as a whole. The anthology feature premiered in Berlin, complete with a forward by its producer, Manfred Jelinski, who introduced it as "The new film from the perverted world of Jorg Buttgereit."

The movie begins with, according to the director, "A voice like this [imitates a woman in labor]. Then you see the body of a man coming

down the screen in blackness, and he's wrapped up like a baby in a mother's belly. Then he stretches out and a child starts to cry on the soundtrack. He's lying there ready to become this guy who's rotting away. It's like the whole decay of life. *Der Todesking* is from the birth to the decay."

Cut to a little girl scribbling on a sketchpad in the sun; *Der Todesking*, {The Deathking} she writes. The suicides begin.

In keeping with the film's divisible structure, the following interview with Buttgereit was conducted over a period of several days.

MONDAY

A man arrives home from work, writes and seals a letter and then tidies



the house. He has a shave, and then takes a lethal overdose of drugs in the bath. The character is now dead for the rest of the film.

BUTTGEREIT—"Der Todesking: it means "King of Death" but it's wrong. The idea is from the mind of a little girl. People ask me why I would want to make a film about suicide and I tell them that for me it's not just a movie about suicide, like *Nekromantik* was not just a film about necrophilia. For me, these are interesting subjects. When *Nekromantik* was first released, nobody seemed to like it. In Germany all these horror guys, these horror fans, said, 'Oh, it's boring and much too arty.' Then they read the critics from England and America and suddenly they took it seriously. If you show an American film in Germany, the audience will call it a great film. If you have a German film shown in Germany, then it's not interesting, unless you're dead like Fassbinder, then it's okay."

TUESDAY

In a video rental shop, a young man looks through the movies on display. He picks up and contemplates a copy of Louis Malle's *My Dinner With Andre*, but opts instead for a sleazy horror film. He chats to the guy behind the counter and shows him a letter he received that morning from a mutual friend—a suicide note—which they both dismiss. Back at his apartment, the young man watches the tape he rented; a Nazi death camp exploitation movie. The SS are inflicting tortures on a bound victim.

The man's wife returns home and nags him for watching another violent movie. He pulls out a revolver and blows her brains out. Then he takes a picture off the wall, removes the frame, and frames the blood splatter on the wall. Suddenly, the camera pulls away to reveal that this entire episode was no more than a movie playing on TV, in a room where an anonymous body hangs dead in the background.

This episode highlights *Der*

Opposite: (top) Tuesday's victim;
(bottom) Wednesday's



What puts the the necro in NEKRO.

"If you have a German film shown in Germany, then it's not so interesting. Unless you're dead like Fassbinder, then it's okay."



A bath of blood in NEKROMANTIK

Todesking's chronic lack of reality, both in itself as a movie as well as any bearing on the real world. The film has broken down aesthetically, while by Wednesday we'll see it break down further still, literally. Why is Buttgereit alienating his audience?

"When you see this guy renting the video, you aren't aware that he's in a film. So for you, in your mind, it's a 'real' person. But *Der Todesking* is more of a film. Someone has told me it's very much like Godard's *Weekend*, but that's a funny thing, you know? When I used to watch that or *Pierrot Le Fou*, these Godard films, I used to laugh a lot about the way he's making you aware of the fact that you're watching a movie. Godard's throwing you out of it. I like that and I find it funny. It isn't art for me, it's a kind of joke. More of a joke about art. Real 'serious' art films don't have these jokes."

It could be said that *Der Todesking* is an exploitation art movie. The suicide victims are nothing more than that, 'victims.' They have no names, no background. They are only interesting as objects.

"That's the fact in real life. Just the actual death of most people is interesting to the newspapers, or that's how it's handled. It's a strange relationship, exploitation and real life. Not art imitating life, but showing it."

The framing of the splatter was an obvious statement?

"It's making art out of sleaze. It's not so much a reference toward horror films in general, but more of the audience, people who just want to see more violence in the movies and don't care about anything else. Popular films like *Hellbound* (*Hell Raiser II*) are simply boring in the end. Just seeing beads blowing away is not interesting to me."

WEDNESDAY

A saddened girl walks alone in the rain, images of an old lover flashing before her. She reaches a park bench and sits down next to a man, who suddenly speaks of his wife's sexual

NEKROMANTIK

Super 8/70min/English Subtitled

FILM THREAT VIDEO

Rating: 10

This film was produced in 1987 by a gang of crazies and sleaze-hounds who work and hang out at Berlin's best underground clubs and "off theaters," which regularly torture good German citizens with a brutal selection of gore, horror, sleaze and crime films; pulverizing the brains and eyeballs of the innocent and occasionally raising the blood-curdling screams of protest from the Fatherland's radical feminists.

Nekromantik employs a morose and creepy musical score and succeeds because it doesn't attempt to over reach its limitations: what you get is the simple, humble story of a morgue assistant who develops a carnal affection for corpses. Rather than some special-effects crammed, blood-gushing gore fest, it's really a sad, perverted and melancholy tale. Yet the scenes of actual necrophilia far surpass the artistic insinuations of the [Charles Bukowski-based] *Love is a Dog From Hell* (Belgium-1988), the only other recent Euro-necro-film that comes to mind.

There are scenes in *Nekromantik* that separate it from the standard attempts at shock, and send the pulse pounding. The two branded into my brain feature a woman screwing a corpse by resourcefully utilizing the leg of a chair for the incapable male member, and the epic closing scene of our "protagonist" celebrating a successful ejaculation with frenzied self-inflicted stab wounds, which result in a gushing, spewing climax that I'm sure your own imagination is capable of envisioning.

In short, *Nekromantik* pulses with the true spirit of its own depraved subject matter and succeeds more hilariously and sickeningly than the massive big-budget films that always seem to lack a little guts. And unlike a lot of gore films of contemporary vintage, this is not a parody.

—Jack Stevenson



Girls just wanna have fun in *NEKROMANTIK*.

problems and hang-ups. He explains that he is so frustrated that he has finally done something terrible. The girl says nothing but takes a pistol from her handbag and points it at the man's head. He takes the gun from her hand, puts it in his mouth and fires.

Does the girl point the gun because she's bored with the stranger's conversation?

"No, she carries the gun because she has the frame of mind to commit suicide, because she's lost her lover or something. But remember that she isn't the one who kills herself. I hate these things where you have a girl who is in some kind of 'love pain' and she commits suicide because of it... We didn't want *Der Todesking* to be full of clichés, all the things that people already know—or seem to know—about suicide. This is why I have the girl carrying the gun, because she is so sad and looks as though she might kill herself. But then there's this guy she bumps into who tells her how his wife bleeds every time they have sexual intercourse, and how he has (ultimately) ripped her head off in some strange way."

She points the gun at him to have some kind of revenge for every woman in the world!"

THURSDAY

A bridge. Persons who have committed suicide jumping from the bridge are named.

This sequence is all that is left of Buttigereit's idea to make a fake "mondo" movie.



"There is this old guy in Germany who looks after the bridge. It has these tiny railings that come up to here (waist high). I asked him if anyone has ever tried to jump off of here and he said, "Sure." So I found a list of all the people who had died jumping from that bridge and used it in the movie. All the names have been changed though, and they conjure up these little stories, like a little girl of sixteen who has a name which means "big one" in German. So you can imagine her committing suicide because of the names she has been called. Or the twin who we

name "Mantle," then we have a victim who was a gynecologist. That's my Cronenberg in-joke."

FRIDAY

A woman who lives alone is jealous

Beatrice M. and
her corpus sexualis.







"There is no message...it's just a film about death."

of the lovers in the apartment next to hers. She watches them from her window and sees them kissing. When the couple retreat from view, the woman knows that they do so to make love. She schemes to interrupt them, phoning their number. No reply. But the couple is not caught within the wild abandon of lovemaking. Instead, they lie dead in bed together, a copy of the "Brotherhood of the Seventh Day" letter between them.

There is a lot of emphasis placed on the sending and receiving of letters in *Der Todesking*. People are writing suicide notes, walking around with letters from ex-lovers, and receiving suicide chain-letters.

"We used all the same envelopes throughout the film, so they look really familiar to the audience. Originally, we were going to use the "Brotherhood of the Seventh Day" as a promotional gimmick and mail them around Berlin before the opening of the film, but the premiere was

due and we didn't have time. Some people joke about chain-letters, but they fear them also. We thought it was a funny idea to have such a thing in a movie about suicide."



So the idea isn't based on an actual experience?

"I did receive a chain-letter once which told me that I was going to fall ill on a certain day, at a certain time if I didn't send copies of it to other people. But I didn't bother and nothing happened. So maybe I'm immune to it!"

SATURDAY

A projector plays several reels of Super 8 film. The first seems to be a test. The second has a girl aligning the camera on herself as she reads from a book—a text on thrill killers—of how by killing others the murderer is manufacturing his own destruction. The third reel shows the same girl posing in front of a mirror, with a second camera strapped to her shoulder and a gun in her hand. She points the

DER TODESKING

16mm/73min/English Subtitled

FILM THREAT VIDEO

Rating: 8

After a couple of years' wait, here is the follow-up to the infamous *Nekromantik*. Director Jorg Buttgereit again serves us up a slice of his own unique celluloid vision, and he certainly hasn't loosened up any since his '87 corpse-fucking classic. This film may not be as graphic in the gore department, but the fact that it deals with nothing but suicide and human pain makes it one of the cheeriest you've seen since *Combat Shock*. Smile and slit your wrists... further... deeper...

However, the quality of the seven suicide/murder vignettes vary from great to dull bullshit, with a 60-40 tendency towards the latter. Compare for example, the great piece where a guy watches a Nazi video at home (in which a dick is cut off on-screen and a Swastika drawn on the unfortunate's chest with the bloody end!), to another segment where nothing happens except for the names of several suicides being superimposed over the bridge where they supposedly met their deaths and you see what I mean. It may be art, Jorg, but I didn't buy it.

However, Buttgereit is the only death-obsessed director making films now (except for that over-rated, egomaniac, spaghetti hack Argento), and any efforts with such an unrelenting and unswerving vision should be encouraged. As it is only his second feature, I'm sure we can look forward to plenty more interesting films from this talented director. He once told me in an interview that he would never do *Nekromantik 2*, so it had better be good.

As for *Der Todesking*, I'll just say this: it's an interesting but flawed project that doesn't live up to the Buttgereit potential. Come on Jorg, we know you can give us another classic like *Nekromantik*, just a bit less pretension and a bit more perversion.

—Graham Rae

revolver at the mirror and at the camera filming her. Another reel of film, but from the silent point-of-view of the shoulder camera: showing a nightclub and a band playing on a stage, with members of the band and audience being shot dead. Someone pulls a gun on the camera and the film goes black.

This would seem to be a culmination of the true crime research Buttgereit was carrying out shortly after the release of *Nekromantik*.

"Yes, this episode is based on several true crime incidents. Like Charles Whitman climbing on top of a building, shooting all these students and being aware of the fact that he can't get away with it because he's trapped himself on the roof. It's a kind of suicide. She's committing suicide as opposed to just killing other people. She wants to be sure that people know about it. She wants to be recognized."

In direct conflict with the Wednesday episode, here is a girl who can shoot. Why play a girl in this part as opposed to a man?

"Just because it's more likely for it to be a man and I wanted to do it in a different way. We talked about having a camera on the shoulder of someone going to a place and shooting people. Sure we thought, we'll take this guy and — wait a minute, why a guy? Let's have a girl. There are all these clichés you have to go over to make it more interesting. You even have to go over your own ideas and rethink everything. It was the same with the concert hall.

At first we wanted to have it in a cinema showing (Peter Bogdanovich's) *Targets*, a film in a film in a film. Then we realized we had already done that in the Tuesday episode, so we decided to have no sound because we were becoming a slave to our own ideas. Despite the fact that we would lose a lot of effects; no gunfire, no screaming."

There are obvious references that can be drawn from this episode, notably *Taxi Driver*.



NEKROMANTIK: a festival of German Ingenuity.

"There is a picture on the girl's wall which you can just see reflected in the mirror when she is standing in front of the mirror with a gun, a picture of Robert DeNiro standing in front of a mirror with a gun. We had to shoot this three times. On the first take, she forgot to put on her

shoulder-camera! She was our script girl...very excited."

SUNDAY

A man rises from his bed. He holds his head in his hands and cries. Rising, he gets out of bed and smashes his head repeatedly against the bedroom wall until he is dead.



"We talked about having a camera on the shoulder of someone going to a place and shooting people. Sure we thought, we'll take this guy and — wait a minute, why a guy? Let's have a girl!"

"Look at his movements, real strange. We actually did the action backwards; we originally filmed it backward and copied it."

Style again takes over in this episode of *Der Todesking*; the film slows down for no other reason than to slow down. The camera spins round while focusing on the dying man, eyes wildly staring back. The whole screen shakes with every sickening thump as the man head-butts the wall.

As with each previous character, his screen time has become chronologically shorter, or more "jagged."

"They became more concentrated toward the end of the movie, more concentrated with idea of the film. In the end you just have an act of dying, with the final character committing the act of suicide with no reason at all: no false reasons, no excuses, nothing."



Saturday:
She's strapped
in and ready
to make herself
famous.

Photo by Christine Karattus

FACES OF THE DEATH KING



Left: TODESKING's Tuesday episode vidiot. Above: Buttgereit in two poses with Rainer Werner Fassbinder.



Daktar Lorenz plays Rob, the lowly, doomed corpse collector in NEKROMANTIK. Lorenz also co-scored the music for NEKRO 1, TODESKING and the coming NEKRO 2.



Left: Susa Kohlstedt, that icy blonde in NEKRO 1. Right: Producer Manfred Jelinski, the brains behind the bones, emerges from relative obscurity.





**Buttgereit indulging
in a favorite pastime.**

We thought about what really happens when you commit suicide by beating your own head against a wall. Him in a completely white room, smashing his head and the wall getting redder. We tried to imagine how the scene would really look, and thought it would be with just a little blood trickling out of his nose. Normally, as we did with *Nekromantik*, we overdo things to make them look real, but we didn't want to make *Der Todesking* this way.

When we were talking about this sequence, we knew it would have to be at the end of the film because there is nothing more to say about it. *Der Todesking* is an experiment, and in some ways it's more offensive than *Nekromantik* because the audience who is watching it is expecting a more over-the-top kind of film — *Nekromantik 2: The Corpse Is Coming To Fuck You* or something! Instead they get a film with lots of talking and without much blood. This is offensive to people who want to see blood. And if you haven't seen *Nekromantik*, it's offensive anyway. To me, it was offensive to do the

last scene without blood."

We are back at the playground. Children laughing. The little girl with the sketchbook finishes her drawing as surreal images of the Deathking on his throne are intercut with her innocent actions. A child

"I don't want to drive people to suicide, just as I don't want them to go fuck a corpse after watching NEKROMANTIK."

plays at his feet. End credits.

Buttgereit has made the movie he wanted to make, despite anticipated negative public reaction to this very un*Nekro*-like second feature. He has experimented with film technique and he has made his statements.

With a working title of *Seven Suicides*, it's not difficult to see why

Buttgereit would opt for the less blatant title of *Der Todesking*. For although it showcases the closing moments of several lives, the movie avoids offering morals or any satisfying reason for the taking of one's own life. Instead, it deals with the elemental character of *Der Todesking* — The

King of Death — who makes people, in the words of the little girl, "not want to live anymore."



Pondering the film for a moment, Buttgereit says, "I don't want to drive people to suicide, just as I don't want them to go fuck a corpse after watching *Nekromantik*. There is no message...it's just a film about death."

Buttgereit and producer Manfred Jelinski are currently finishing *Nekromantik 2*, "with it beginning exactly where the first left off, the spade going into Daktari's grave and then Daktari being dug up. Then the adventure would begin again, but with him as the corpse. It will have to be quite different." 

CONFISCATED!

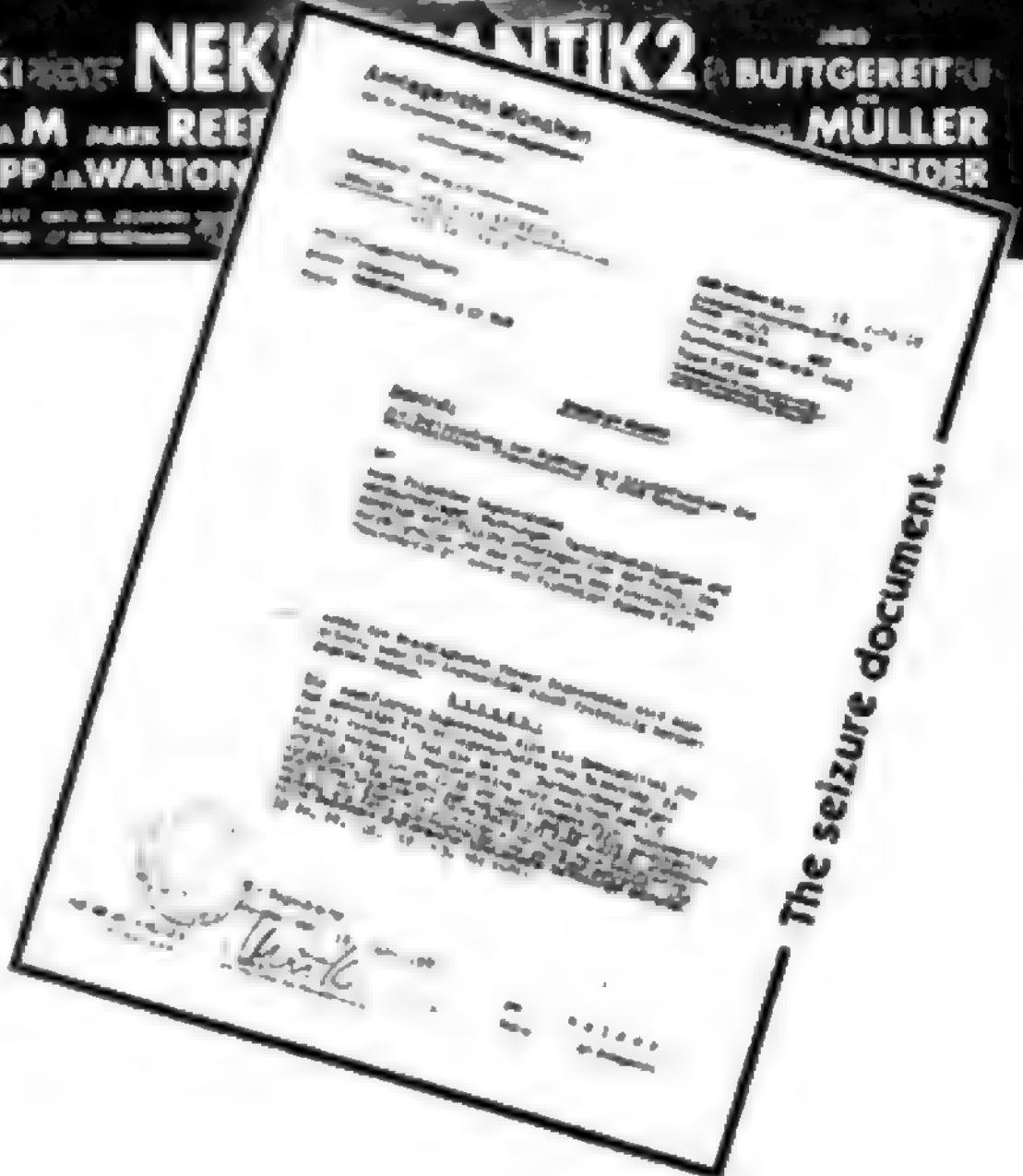
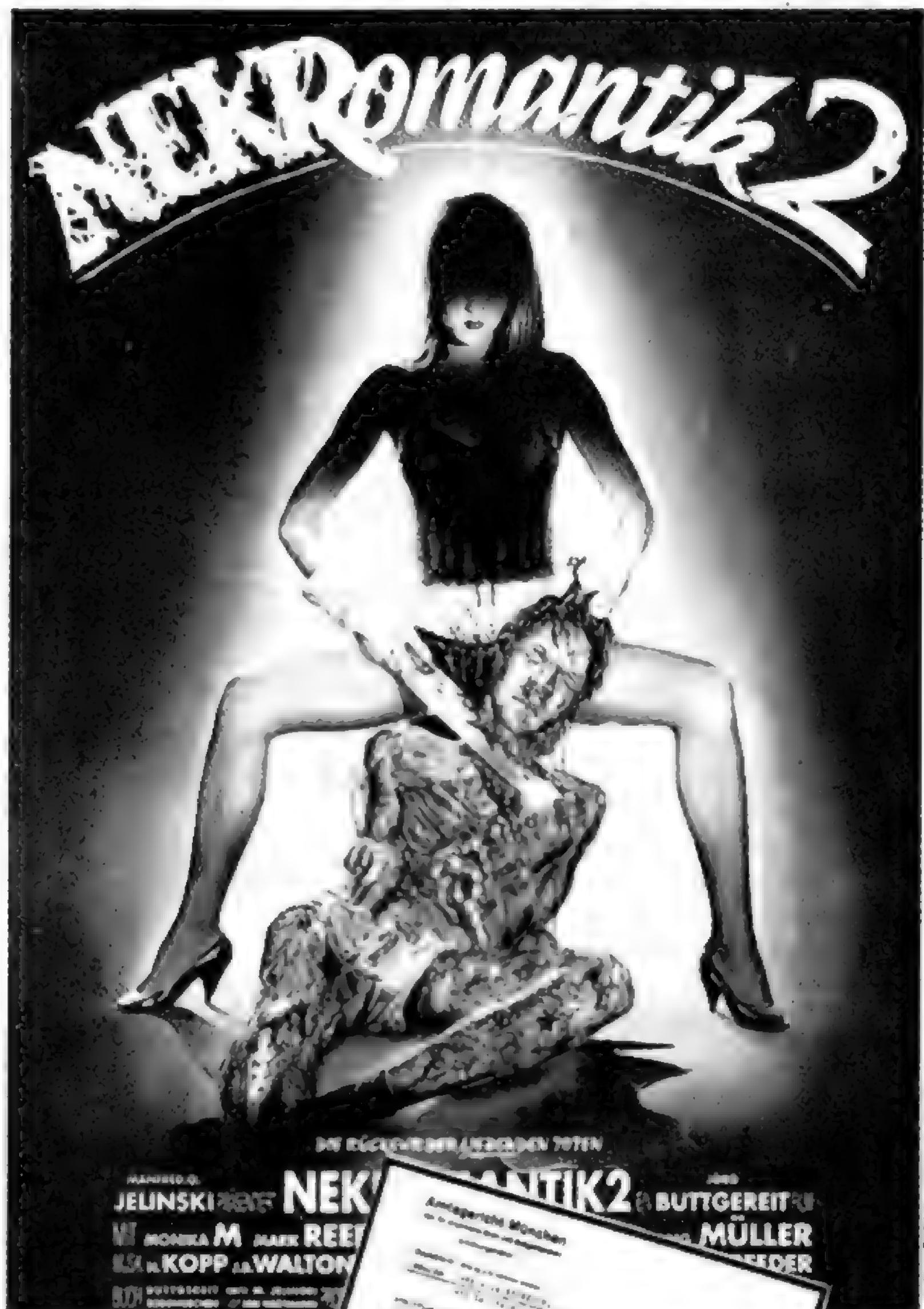
FIVE MINUTES INTO THE
June 19, 1991 screening of Buttgereit's recently completed *Nekromantik 2* in Munich, Germany, the show was brought to a screeching halt by the district attorney, who burst into the projection booth and unceremoniously confiscated the print. The reason? Apparently, he was overly impressed by a grisly scene in which a young man is decapitated by his girlfriend during intercourse.

Producer Manfred Jelinski, also responsible for the original and *Der Todesking*, quickly took steps to insure that the film's negative and other prints "disappeared" from his home. Jelinski explained, "I spent the next day spreading everything out over a dozen friends for safe keeping. In Munich this has turned into a much beloved newspaper story, but, fortunately, there haven't been any searches yet." Undaunted by this unwelcomed attention, Jelinski plans a press screening with one of the surviving prints. Further news indicates that another print in Bavaria is being scrutinized by the local authorities.

Although we have not yet seen the film, one objective Deutschlander (who asked to remain nameless, the chicken shit) reports that it goes way beyond the original with over-the-top gore, "but lacks the sick originality of the first one." We'll see. **CW**



Jelinski and Buttgereit on the set of NEKRO 2.



The seizure document.

The shocking coital decapitation that forced the Munich D.A. to halt the film's premiere and seize the print.



Taking control of the situation, the beautiful Monika M. pushes the envelope in a stomach knotting scene that will make her, not to mention the film, famous.



TASTY SCENES FROM NEKRO 2



PRODUCER OF THE DEAD

MARK HEADLEY is a producer, but not a stereotypical one. Neither a bumbling, film-illiterate money-grubber, nor an icy, tight-fisted, Armani-suited business animal, he is an acerbic realist who truly loves making movies.

Interview by David E. Williams



Headley strikes a pose.

MARK HEADLEY'S career has twisted its way through a variety of film projects, including the nightmarish task of producing the English versions of foreign films; Frederico Fellini's 1986 feature *Ginger and Fred* being the most memorable. While also an accomplished documentarist, his independent feature credits such as *Vampire at Death Beach*, *Neon Maniacs* and *Beverly Hills Zombie Squad II* probably serve as better references when discussing his latest project: a Super 8 feature titled *Nudist Colony of the Dead*.

A tongue-in-cheek horror spoof rather than a serious (and bad) B-picture, *Nudist Colony* was directed by camp-master Mark Pirro, the man who brought us the classics *A Polish*

Opposite: De-Ann Power struts her stuff from beyond the grave.

Vampire in Burbank and *The Curse of the Queerwolf*.

Colony follows the twisted tale of oppressed nudists who commit suicide after vowing revenge against a gaggle of religious zealots who have foreclosed on their beloved birthday-suit getaway. Complete with well-choreographed musical numbers (reminiscent of Michael Jackson's John Landis-directed *Thriller* video), excessive Bible-thumping and some great *Living Dead*-esque sight gags, *Nudist*

Colony is sure to be the perfect companion piece to Pirro's other horror comedies.

Long-maned and soft spoken, Headley recently gave us these helpful hints on working with investors, breaking into the business, and getting films made.

*You've had a couple gigs producing 35mm features and then you came back to this, *Nudist Colony of the Dead*, a Super 8 feature. Why?*

I've produced six 35mm films and wrote, produced and directed two of them. It takes about a year and half to two years just to get the money, which is the hardest part. So we came up with the idea of instead of doing one film every two years, you know one big 35mm film, it would be fun to do maybe three or four of these Super 8 movies a year. But the real challenge was, could we do a quality Super 8

movie, one that could make its money back?

The biggest complaints I've heard from filmmakers are about having to raise money and down time between films.

But Super 8 affords you the ability to go out, on weekends even, with a camera and forty, fifty dollars worth of film and go ahead and make your movie, instead of waiting around for investors that really take all the fun out of it.

Is a low-budget project more attractive to investors?

Well, you can be your own investor if you want. The cheapest part of any production is the pre-production. That's where you simply get the story together, break down your script, and start casting. You can literally wake up in the morning and say, "I'm going to pre-produce."

Or, "I think I'll shoot today."

I think I'll go out today and make a movie. With 35mm, you get up in the morning and have to think, "Well, how can I get the money?"

Mark Pirro has already directed several features and Nudist Colony is the third of his horror spoof films. Are investors attracted to this kind of subject matter?

First of all, Mark's films are pretty much his own trend. You know he's a very talented filmmaker, a very funny filmmaker, and since these are the kinds of films that Mark enjoys making, he makes them very well. Investors will back a film for a lot of different reasons, but my experience with them has



Despite the film's low budget, this wasn't the typical "down and dirty" Super 8 shoot



NUDIST COLONY improvisation: writer/director Pirro sneaks a peek at the Steadicam Jr. monitor while director of photography Craig Bassuk gets a helping hand.

been that if they've got a lot of money, they've made it by doing something relatively boring. They look at a talented filmmaker who has a lot of creative and fun ideas, but see someone who's usually not good at business. It's that union that excites the investor, getting involved in the art world. So, it's a good marriage once you find an investor who wants to dabble with the artist. Yeah, dealing with investors is the boring part. [Laughs]. They're usually people who don't know anything about filmmaking.

Do you find that an advantage, the fact that they really don't know what they're getting into?

They don't need to know.

Do a lot of them want to know? Or are they just interested in this more as an investment?

They want to know. They want to involve themselves in the filmmaking process. And I do, with investors, get them involved as much as possible without interfering with the production. And that's a very delicate balance. A little knowledge with an investor can be very dangerous, especially if they start making creative calls that they know nothing about.

Have you had those problems before?

All the time. Because an investor that's in business has always been in control of a situation, if they're good. When they get involved with the filmmaking process they want to feel that they are in control. So you just have to have that understanding up front that there are certain things, certain input they can have and certain input they can't have.

What if an investor on Nudist Colony of the Dead said, "Oh, I don't want the nudist part. I don't want people to be nude." What are some of the tactics that you would use in order to deal with some kind of conflict?

Again, I respect the investor from the standpoint—it's his money. He's making the gamble. So, it's just a matter of getting them to see eye to eye with the director. The example you used, you know nudity, it's usually a director's call. But it's possible that the investor may know about certain censorship things that you have to look out for in a film. How is that film going to make enough to get the money back to the investor? So that would be more a mix between a creative call and a business call. And I pretty much defer to the investor on the business call situations.

As the producer, it's your job to get the film made, but after it's made what kind of role do you have in getting it distributed?

I haven't really been that heavily involved in that side of the film. Quite frankly, I'm not that interested in the distribution process because that is a heavy-duty business situation. A lot of the money is made in distribution and there are a lot of professionals that know what they're doing in that arena. But there are also a lot of crooks. And it's just a matter, as a producer, of trying to find the ones that are going to give you a good deal and staying away from the ones that are going to try to screw you.

Are there any guidelines for people trying not to get screwed?

Well, unfortunately, you have to expect to get shafted in the beginning. What you as a filmmaker want to do is make the film you want to make and unfortunately it takes money. So there's the delicate balance of how much you want to compromise your project, but you got to make that first film so people will look and say,



Attack of the nudists: De-Ann Power and Angeline Horiatis were recruited from Hollywood's legendary Tropicana Nightclub, the reputed birthplace of interactive hot oil wrestling.

"Okay, this guy definitely has talent."

You have to legitimize yourself.

Right. People will not invest in somebody that is, just what I call a "wanna-be." Quite frankly, in this business you have to show people. People don't

are my talents, what am I strongest in?" If it's in filmmaking, are you good in lighting, are you good in selecting actors, are you good at securing interesting sets, are you good at special effects makeup? Take your best shot—put together maybe a five or ten minute short film, because if you haven't even done that, who's going to believe you can do a ninety-minute feature?

It's a small investment for what you're looking for.

And you've got that to build up your confidence a bit so you can say, "Well, if I can do this then I can do a twenty minute. And if I can do a twenty minute, I can do a fifty minute. And if I can do a fifty minute, I can certainly do a ninety minute." It's a matter of stepping stones. A lot of people have this false illusion about Hollywood that you can start right at the top. I mean, some people have been able to do it, but a lot of your "overnight successes" have taken ten

read in this industry. They want to see. So if you have something that's well shot, well lit and well acted, it's much better than having something well written.

What would be the best direction that a filmmaker could take so far as putting together a presentation for a producer?

First of all, they have to look hard at himself or herself and say, "Okay, what

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years. That's another part of Hollywood that's kind of fun and exciting. It is a gamble, and sometimes you hit the lottery.

Getting back to the Nudist Colony production, part of the problem with a low-budget feature is that it takes so long to get it done. You guys have been shooting for how long now?

Well, actually since November [1990]. We were in production for about six or seven months, but a lot of that time was spent raising the money.

What are some of the problems that you've had with that?

Nudist Colony was actually a very complex picture. We have helicopter shots, zombies, dancing, a lot of actors, and we have a lot of locations. It's a musical, it's a romance, so we basically did everything that you shouldn't do

work, your research, and some tests. But once you become familiar with Super 8, then the economics are so much more pleasant. The equipment is much smaller so you can get in and out of an area very quickly. Which is great because with low-budget, you want to try to go into an area and not pay the permits which can be \$125-150 a day, which adds up really fast. With Super 8 you can go in and look like a fledgling student group and nobody will hassle you. You can go into the middle of Beverly Hills and they think, "Oh, that's cute, a little student group." And you can come up with some phenomenal shots. If you went in with 35mm...

Or even 16mm.

You're gonna be pounced on by the police for not having a location permit and you won't be able to get your shots. So there are a lot of advantages

"I feel that the money spent on a film school could be spent just as easily on making a movie."

in a low-budget film. You should have one location, very few actors, no special effects, and just keep it simple. Unfortunately, we didn't keep it simple, so it wasn't your "down-and-dirty" Super 8 movie.

What's the final budget?

About \$30-35,000, so it's well within the realm of low-budget filmmaking. It's one of the most inexpensive films that I've produced in about eight years, but it has a good look and it's a funny little film. Most of the time was spent getting familiar with Super 8 filmmaking. There are a lot of similarities between Super 8 and 35mm, but I believe it actually takes a much better filmmaker to do Super 8. Primarily because of the film stocks. There isn't as much latitude for error.

Right, so you have to do your home-

to Super 8. You just learn what the strengths are and what the weaknesses are and just capitalize on those strengths.

What are the strengths of shooting Super 8 as opposed to video?

Film is film. Super 8, 16mm and 35mm are all superior to video. People have a tendency to want to watch film as compared to video. Stuff that is shot on video is usually your soap opera kind of things, your low-end situation comedies. If you want to do any quality material, you shoot film, because the rule of thumb is that you want to start with the best originating material, which again is film. Then you can go to video.

*So far as some of the mistakes you have made on *Nudist Colony of the Dead* or other films...?*

Well, I'm a film junkie and my goal is to make as many good films as possible. I don't like having to take long periods of time between projects, I don't like getting rusty. When studios were cranking them out back in the '20s and '30s, they made a lot of B-pictures. The writers, producers, directors, actors were all on contract, so every day they were out there doing their schtick. So these people got incredibly good. Now in the days of high production costs, the studios aren't able to make that many films, so it's been sort of regulated to the independents. Now the independents are having a hard time because it is such a hard market place. So there's actually less production going on. Right now the market dictates that you either have to have an extremely high budget, high box-office films, or very low-budget films. The in-between films kind of went out about two or three years ago. After all that, I'd have to say the biggest mistake I've made is wasting time between productions.

There are a lot of the big directors who are producing their own films. Do you think there's any kind of problem with doing both?

In a lot of cases you have to. On a low-budget you have to be everything, including the set designer and floor sweeper. A real filmmaker has a passion to make films, but it's difficult when you're first starting out to find people with that same passion. I've learned to expect very little of people and then you won't be disappointed. But if you can get other people to share in that vision and that passion, so much the better. On a bigger budget, the passion is often generated more by money than by interest in the project, so it's easy to get a hundred people to show up at five in the morning when you're paying big bucks.

Is there any real need for people to go to film schools like USC, UCLA, etc.?

No. I don't want to discourage anybody from taking the route that they feel they should take, but I feel that the money spent on a film school could be spent just as easily on making a movie. I'd rather see the money actually going into raw stock instead of going into tuition to support a building on some campus.

Do you think that there's really a need be in L.A.? Is this town a Mecca for any other reason than tradition?

You have to come to Hollywood if you want to be doing more and more films, but if you're in Kansas—make films in Kansas. It's going to be a lot easier in some cases because you'll find a lot more people interested in getting involved. It's more of a novelty. But then you'll also get a lot of people who don't know anything about f-stops or whatever. But I maintain that anything in the filmmaking process can be learned by just picking up a book or talking to somebody and saying, "How do you do this?" The filmmaking process isn't so technically complicated that you can't just jump in and do it. **MTG**

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CHINESE FIX

A primer to Asian action films and a warning to those who find solace in those interchangably titled, unexpectedly actionless (though highly profitable) STEVEN SEAGAL films. Out For Hard Marked To Kill anyone?



By Nathan Long

HONG KONG
is the Hollywood of Asia. They make comedies, dramas, romances, but the thing they do best is ACTION! You think Arnold and Sly kick ass? You think Van Damme and Seagal are martial artists? Those guys are nothing compared to

Jackie Chan, Yuen Baio or Samo Hung, the kings of Chinese cinema.

I'll have to admit, my first taste of Chinese action films didn't really leave me hungry for more. I saw Jackie years ago on cable in *The Big Brawl*, his first attempt to crack the American market. Weighted down by clunky direction and clumsy American stuntmen (whose idea of worthy opponents were overweight ex-pro wrestlers), Jackie could show us only a watered-down version of his genius.

Six years passed before I got another sample. I was browsing through my local video store when I saw Jackie's name on a video called *Police Force*, and thought "I remember this guy. He was pretty funny, I'll get this."



YUEN BAILO



SAMO HUNG

What makes Chinese action scenes never stop moving? Firstly, the pace is twice that of American fighting, the action coming so quickly that it can leave you dizzy. The second difference is imagination. Hong Kong choreographers make use of the surroundings and props in ways American stunt directors would never think possible.

In most American action films, the

good guy and the bad guy stand toe to toe and slug each other into mindless oblivion (see Eastwood's *Every Which Way But Loose* for example). They may chase each other around a little, but when it comes to the actual fight, it's like two dinosaurs wallowing

in a tar pit. Each punch comes from the horizon and lands like a slow motion freight train. As for imaginative use of their environment; if the action coordinator tells the good guy to hit the bad guy with a chair, he feels he's pushing the edges of the creative envelope.

The average Chinese fight scene contains more action and invention than *Lionheart* and *Out For Justice* combined. The punches and kicks fly thick and fast, as the combatants dive over counters, duck under tables, slide across the floor, fight with umbrellas, plates, coat racks, chairs, pool cues, whatever! The actors do back-flips, spins, high kicks, low blows, leaps and falls from incredible heights.



Chan's reckless stunts have left him uninsurable.

Choreography is all important. A well executed stunt is held in the same high regard U.S. splatter fans give an exceptional piece of special effects gore, with some taking hundreds of takes to get right.

In *Armor of God II*, Jackie Chan is fighting an Arab, scuffling for a gun on a carpet. The Arab is about to grab the gun when Jackie snaps the edge of the rug, popping the gun up into the air. Jackie leaps, grabs it in mid-air, rolls over the Arab's back and lands in a correct firing stance with the barrel pointed right at the Arab's nose.

They MIGHT have done this gag in an American film, but there would have been a cut for snapping the carpet, a cut for the gun popping up, a cut for Jackie leaping, a cut for him catching the gun, etc... There are no cuts here. It's filmed in one take.

Why? Because Hong Kong cinema has a tradition of authenticity to uphold when it comes to stunts. The directors tend to favor extended shots that show a whole sequence of actions, therefore you will rarely see convenient cut-aways or edits during an action scene, rather than the American style which cuts after each punch so that no

actual choreography is necessary. The audience also demands that the stars do their own stunts whenever possible, so the stars are all in top physical shape. Steven Seagal with his shirt off is an ugly sight, and he hasn't had both feet off the ground in four films. Chan literally jumps from one and two story buildings so often it almost seems commonplace. It's a different world, and to a person jaded by American action, a very exciting one.

Pretty soon I was making weekly



Steven Seagal with his shirt off is an ugly sight, and he hasn't had both feet off the ground in four films.

treks to a nearby Chinese video store-like a junkie staggering blindly toward an opium den, desperately searching out new titles. Then, the inevitable happened. No more Jackie! I can see one or two videos at night. That's fourteen films in a week if I really push it and Jackie only makes one or two films a year, so I was bound to catch up with him sometime.

I had to keep the high going, so I began broadening my scope. Yuen

Baio and Samo Hung, who often co-star with Jackie, make movies of their own. I would point to their faces on the video boxes and plaintively ask the Chinese video clerks, "More?" And these patient providers would dig through the racks and come up with new treasures.

Samo Hung looks like a Chinese John Belushi: tubby, with a sardonic grin and perfect comic timing. He's also a kung-fu whirlwind, faster than guys half his weight, and more flexible than Schwarzenegger will ever be. Despite his bulk, he still manages all the required flips, falls and flying high kicks. In *My Lucky Stars*, Hung is attacked by a Japanese assassin armed with

a pair of deadly sai. He grabs the first thing that comes to hand, a pair of tennis rackets, and uses them to battle the guy for five deranged minutes before knocking him senseless.

Yuen Baio, the youngest of the three, is a perky, slightly smarmy teen idol type, and is possibly even more acrobatic than Jackie. Though not as adventuresome in the dangerous stunt department, Baio is frighteningly flexible and seemingly able to defy gravity. Baio's high kick is so amazing he can kick a man standing behind him in the face without even so much as turning around.

There are also women. Name one legitimate American female action star. Sigourney Weaver? Linda Hamilton? There

are dozens of women in Hong Kong action films, and they don't cower behind the hero or break a nail at inopportune moments. They kick ass! One American woman, Cynthia Rothrock, (who has looks, fighting ability and at least as much acting talent as Steven Seagal), can't get cast in American movies. Not even in character roles. But she's made about thirty films in China, at least a third of which she's starred in. The other

women are equally amazing. More flexible even than the men, they move like dancers and fight like tigers. And we're not talking about hair pulling cat fights. These are full throttle, knock down, drag out brawls. Try to imagine Julia Roberts getting kicked through a plate glass window and coming up fighting. Yeah right!

Moving even farther afield, I discovered other genres and other directors with their own distinctive styles.

There's Tsui Hark, the hippest of the Hong Kong directors, whose wild MTV cutting and art direction are getting him noticed by the U.S. art house crowd. Hark's films are filled with wizards and warriors battling in blue and red lit wastelands, beautiful ghosts who trail miles of fluttering silk, insane mid-air duels, and liberal doses of horror comedy, *a la Evil Dead II*.

At the other end of the spectrum is John Woo, the Sam Peckinpah of Hong Kong. His films are an unsettling mix of syrupy romanticism and bloodsoaked slo-mo gun battles. Not much fisticuffs here, but the blood squibs should get equal billing with his stars. *The Killer*, a recent Woo melodrama, got a lot of good press during its recent art house run here in the states for its slick style and over-the-top mayhem. But if it ever gets shown theatrically in the U.S., Woo's next film might not get such a warm reception. At over two hours, *Bullets in the Head* is the most consistently violent film I've seen in a lifetime of violent films. Put *RoboCop* and *Total Recall* together and multiply by ten and you might understand how mind-numbingly violent this film is.

So how can you see these films? Well, I'm lucky. I live in L.A. where there is a large Chinese population. If you don't live in a big city, you may not be so fortunate. But all is not lost. Many of the Jackie Chan films are available through ads in various Kung Fu mags. If you can't afford the forty or more dollars they're asking maybe your local video store can. If there's a martial arts school near you, some of the students may have collections and connections. Some art theaters run the artier Tsui Hark and John Woo films. From here on you're on your own. **FVG**

A SHORT HISTORY OF JACKIE CHAN



Chan started a life of martial arts at age seven, when his parents enrolled him in the Peking Opera School; a performing arts school that trained boys in weapons, singing, dancing and kung-fu for a career in traditional Chinese opera.

After graduating at seventeen, he found work as a stunt man and extra in hundreds of cheapo kung-fu epics.

When Bruce Lee died, the Lo Wei movie studio tried to groom Jackie as his successor. Jackie

tried his best, but he didn't have the macho intensity that was Lee's stock in trade.

The films flopped. Then Seasonal Films, a rival studio, picked up his contract. They saw in Jackie something Lo Wei missed.

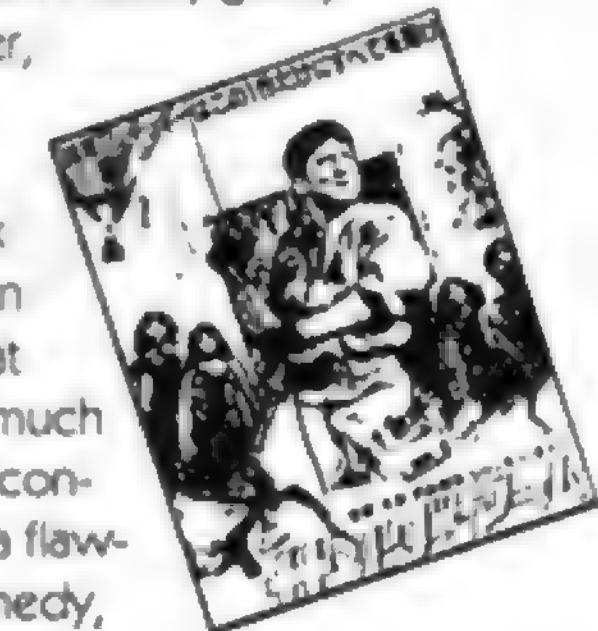
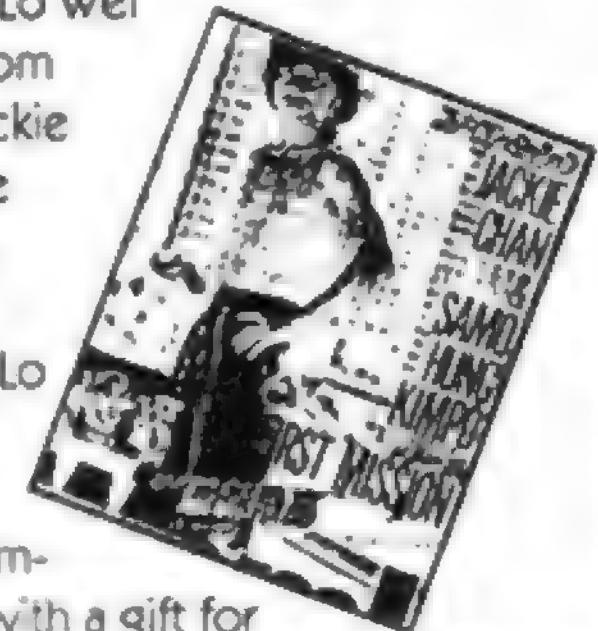
Instead of forcing him into roles he was obviously uncomfortable with, they let Jackie be himself; a knock-about clown with a gift for acrobatics and kung-fu. Rather than copy Lee's hard-ass posturing, he bamboozled his opponents with hand-springs and somersaults, fighting with chopsticks and wine jars, bar stools and dishrags. Where Bruce would stare down his opponents with a steely gaze,

Jackie leapt from rafter to rafter, haranguing them like a chimpanzee.

Chan soon became a top box office draw, and with success came control. He began first to choreograph, then direct his own films. Shaky at first, with all his creativity spent on the action and not much left over for plot or character, his pictures have gotten consistently better. His most recent, *Armor of God II*, is a flawless blend of plot, character, comedy, and mind-bending action.

Jackie knows that the audience comes to see him and what he can do. Using a stunt man would be a breach of faith, so he never uses a double. Every fall, every dive, every kick in the head is Jackie. Of course there are consequences. Because of their flagrant disregard for personal safety, Chan and his stuntmen are no longer insurable. His last five or six films have been made without insurance. Jackie is wounded often, and in one instance, nearly died. A fall from a 30 foot tree almost ended his career. He struck his head on a rock, pushing part of his skull into his brain. The doctors put a plastic plug in his head and Jackie went on to finish the movie.

At 36, Jackie figures he can keep doing his own stunts for another four years before the limitations of a less resiliant body force him to stop. Four years means only four to six more pictures. It's sad to think that there will be an end to Jackie's physical brilliance, but there's always the hope he'll find a worthy successor and continue his genius behind the camera. •



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THE RIGHT SIDE OF MY BRAIN
(1984) with Lydia Lunch,
Henry Rollins, Clint Ruin.
Music by J. G. Thirwell.
Lydia rants, raves and gets
raped. 23 min.



THE MANHATTAN LOVE SUICIDES
(1985) with Tommy
Turner, James Harding.
Sick suicides in Soho.
35 min

SUBMIT TO ME (1986) with
Lydia Lunch, Lung Leg.
Sex and death. 8 min.



DEATH VALLEY 69 (1986) with
Sonic Youth, Lydia
Lunch. Mind-blowing
music video by Sonic
Youth. 5 min.



YOU KILLED ME FIRST (1986)
with Lung Leg, Karen
Finley. A demented
coming of age story that
climaxes in a confused
girl's rage as she kills her
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FEATURE

THE GLAMOROUS WORLD OF THE MOVIES (NOT!)

*All work and no pay: the making of John Stryzik's **THE SPIRIT GALLERY**.*

By Corey Sienega



Beautiful young actress Holly Riddle gets goopy in **THE SPIRIT GALLERY.**

“YOU CAN STILL SEE
the wires, Rodd. They're your
effects-what are you going to do about
this?!”

Taking a Freud-like pose, Rodd
slowly and methodically scratched his
chin, answering only after a mightily
pregnant pause with these soon-to-be-
infamous words: “More slime, John.”

I looked down at our already slime-
drenched actors seated nose-to-nose on

the bed, tendrils of dripping, boil-
infested, man-made flesh flapping
about their faces. Trying carefully not
to pull at the oozing pieces of skin
glued to her face, I loosened the
strings that attached my fingers to
Holly, our lead actress, and her new
facial appendages. Mike stood across
from me struggling with the strings
attached to his own fingers, alternately
tugging and waving the juicy bits o'

facial flesh belonging to Jim, our lead
actor. This effect comes at the climax
of the film when the two lovers even-
tually become joined together as one
giant, living, breathing mass of meat
before exploding.

Mike and I puppeted the seething
tendrils, sliding them one over the
other until nothing more than one of
Holly's watering blue eyes even sug-
gested humanity in the midst of the

raw pus mass that filled the monitor. I began to think of the events that had led up to this moment. I had graduated from SFSU film school dreaming of the glamorous world of movie-making. And here I was, only four days later, A.D. by default on an independent, shot-on-video feature. Actually the whole crew was filled with hyphenates: John was the writer/director/producer/DP, Mike was sound/camera assistant, Sue was camera/sound assistant, Gilbert was makeup/featured actor, Rodd was Zen/FX man, Ken took stills, I was AD/continuity, Frank is editor and owns the camera, Holly, Jim, Nell and Leonard were the actors, and we were all PA's.

Looking back on things, I think perhaps that John Strysik is functionally insane, a quality which seems to be working out for him quite well. I asked him what made him think that he could shoot a feature length anything (video or not) in 24 days, and what gave him the ability to convince me and a host of others to work for a month for varying degrees of *nada*. He told me he decided to make this film, a shot-on-video feature called *The Spirit Gallery*, because he'd been out of work for a while, had a script and fell into some sort of recent inheritance.

I'm not sure that most people would consider making a movie the wisest investment, but then again, even I decided I could just live off a credit card for a while in order to do this. Only for the movies would people jump at the chance to hump equipment around, fourteen hours a day for a month in exchange for no money, greasy donuts and stomach-cramping Mexican food. However, having all decided to take that jump, we found ourselves here, all strung up and covered in Hexaplasmin, slime of the pro's.

Threaties might recognize John Strysik and Rodd Matsui from *Dark Romances*, having both directed their own segments of the anthology project. John moved on to directing several *Tales From the Darkside* episodes and just recently began a directing job on the return of the Sid



Top: Jim Burkhart as pre-pustule-encrusted Catch, the elusive, if not metamorphic, artist. Bottom: Nell Schwartz (the wardrobe/actress hyphenate) as the Healing Woman cradles a battered Haul, played by Leonard Parnell.



and Marty Kroft Saturday morning cult favorite, *Land of the Lost*. (Everybody: "Marshall, Will and Holly, on a routine expedition..!") The show stars Timothy Bottoms (*The Last Picture Show*) as Tom with two kids, Annie and Kevin. There is no word yet on the return of the Sleestacks or the reincarnation of the co-classic series, *Dr. Shrinker*.

Rodd now runs his own effects company and most recently finished supervising the appliance make-up for *Nightmare on Elm Street 6: Freddie's Dead*. He is currently supervising the effects for the upcoming Charles Band film, *Dangerous Toys*.

So what is *Spirit Gallery* about? Well, "It's a high class horror film that offers a twist on *The Portrait of Dorian Gray*." Or so the tag line goes. Maybe, but with more slime. Lucky for the crew, the cast seemed to have a near perfect temperament for all the "hurry up and wait" of makeup and shooting. Of course there were some trying times for all of us, like the day we ended up shooting for over seven hours in the confines of a tiny bathroom. Holly became a bit edgy hanging around in a towel (or less!) in front of everyone for such long periods of time. It seemed that the more tired she got, the more pronounced her South Carolina accent



"I just want you to know that this thing on my lip isn't anything, I accidentally stabbed myself with an Exact-O knife."

became.

During one strange moment in the film, Gwendolyn (Holly) has to get down on her knees and drown a crucifix in the bathtub. After waiting a

while for us to set up, she asked, "Can I see it?"

"Can you see what?"

"No. Can I see it?"

"What? What do you want to see?" we all asked.

"No. Can I see it down on the floor?"

Uh, yeah. Being naive and from California, I did learn during this shoot that people aren't necessarily stupid just because they have a southern accent. They only sound like they are. To her credit, Holly was really great to put up with all the ribbing about her accent, and not only was she a solid actress, but she could cry just like Jennifer Beals: with big round tears—anytime she wants. Now that's power.

During one fantasy sequence, the first scene that Holly and Jim had together, the two had to kiss. We were shooting on the beach that day and got started late, rushing things in order to not get washed away with the tide.

Approximately thirty seconds before John called action, Jim said to Holly "I just want you to know that this thing on my lip isn't anything, I accidentally stabbed myself with an Exact-O knife."

Then John started yelling, "Action! Kiss, kiss! The water's coming in!" Pretty romantic stuff.

One of the more frightening moments was during a night shoot in Oakland. Anyone who is familiar with



Can you see the wires in the gross-out finale?

Oakland's reputation [As a crime infested, drug addled nightmare-Ed.] might understand that, but what happened seemed even more scary than the prospect of being mugged. The scene was a dream sequence where Haul (Leonard Parnell) is chased and then beaten by gang members. The men in our crew played the gang members (John is the one with the beard) and Mike, our sound man, had to take some swings at Leonard while the other guys held his arms. It seemed like Mike was getting pretty close and the audible whoosh in the air with each swing was impressive, impressive enough to make us all a bit edgy. John called for a series of takes. Mike heard him. Leonard didn't. You know what's coming-WHAM! Right in the nose! Blood, entrails, a whispering of "Oh, shit" from the crew. "What the hell are you doing, man?!" shouted Leonard rather loudly, just before he gave a very surprised and apologetic Mike a mighty shove. Leonard threw up his hands and said, "That's

it" and started walking toward his car. We all thought that was the end of it, with no way of reshooting at that point. Lucky for us, his nose wasn't

broken and he decided to keep going. That's dedication.

On the last day of the shoot, after the daily complaints about long hours, no money, bad lunches, disgusting special effects and each other, we were all kind of sad. We went out and got a bunch of margaritas, then went to a bar and then back to my house, but eventually we had to say goodbye.

I remembered shaking the dean's (August Coppola, Francis Ford's brother) hand on that sunny graduation afternoon only a month ago. When I thought of working on a film crew, I had dreamt of big cranes and dollies, an intimidating guy with a baseball cap, a megaphone and a vision. Shiny aluminum catering wagons and my name in bold letters scrolling brightly down a blackened screen. What I really got was a frustrated guy ridin' my back for a month, credit problems, some new friends, valuable experience and a dose of reality. Not a bad deal. **FVW**



Holly suddenly realizes that acting isn't all glamour and beauty.

FAST FORWARD

KNOW THE ENEMY

In the secretive world of major motion picture production, there are many times when a name is much more recognizable than any face. This should not be the case. You should be able to spot these fat cats if you ever meet them in a dark alley. When they are alone. This installment features the mega-co-writer/producer/director and mega-executive producer responsible for more than their share of this summer's cinematic mayhem.

By Paul T. Riddell & David E. Williams

JAMES CAMERON



GALE ANN HURD



CANADIAN JAMES CAMERON IS probably the best example of the new generation of filmmakers: starting out on low-budget projects which did very well, and then quickly going berserk when offered a real budget. Born August 16, 1954, Jim studied physics at CA State University. After supporting his writing habit with a truck driving job, he began his film career as a New World Pictures FX team flunky on such Roger Corman films as *Battle Beyond the Stars*. There, he met up with Gale Ann Hurd, a Stanford-graduated Phi Beta Kappa turned struggling movie wanna-be. After serving as Corman's executive assistant, she quickly moved up the foodchain to become the company's director of advertising, publicity, and ultimately co-produce the film *Smokey Bites the Dust* with Roger himself. Following a series of cheapo writing/directing gigs (including *Piranah II*), they began their collaborative endeavors

with 1984's modest surprise hit *The Terminator*. After Cameron penned Sylvester Stallone's revisionist epic *Rambo II*, their success continued with *Aliens* and (to a much lesser extent) *The Abyss*. After their divorce, Cameron went on to marry director Kathryn (Near Dark, Blue Steel, Point Break) Bigelow, and Hurd produced *Alien Nation*, the giant-worm thriller *Tremors*, and the cop comedy *Downtown*.

However, such separate bliss was not to be. The two teamed up again (with the seemingly infinite money supply of Carolco Pictures chief Mario Kassar) to produce/direct the Arnold Schwarzenegger-driven *Terminator 2: Judgement Day*, an all but unstoppable money-machine with the dubious distinction of becoming the most expensive movie ever made—with a rumored budget of over \$100 million.

Oh the humanity. **FTV**

HOW TO FREAK THEM OUT

(1) In your best Harlan Ellison voice, call Hurd and idly comment that Rockne O'Bannon's original script for *Alien Nation* was much better than the film. Her office is at Pacific Western Productions (213) 836-5303

(1A) Ask her opinion of *Blue Steel* and *Point Break*.

(2) After mentioning how great you thought *Rambo II* was, ask Cameron how it's possible for a \$110 million dollar movie to make any profit without "innovative" bookkeeping. His office is at Lightstorm Entertainment (818) 562-1301

(2A) Ask why he didn't seem to learn anything from Roger Corman.

(3) Try to get either one to autograph the *Terminator 2* issue of *Cinefantastique*. (Good luck!)

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TWISTED TISSUES

*The Colorfully Rotting Brain Cells
of CHARLES PINION*

Interview by David Aaron Clark

LEAT'S FADE IN on perhaps Charles Pinion's most ignoble screen moment to date, for no other reason than to be cruel and because he specifically asked us not to:

It's Buffalo, New York. The dead of winter, 1989. We're in a dank, freezing basement, where a fanboy shot-on-video splatter epic is being made. Charles, ever game to suffer for Art or an unreasonable facsimile thereof, is rolling around on the bare floor in a flesh pretzel with his well-endowed girlfriend, neither one of them clad in anything more than skimpy leather BVDs and two quarts of-unwarmed-red dye and Karo syrup.

He's busy mouthing some particularly inane dialogue that sounds straight out of *Hellraiser* by way of too many bowls of paraquat-sprayed grass and old Slayer albums scratched from being spun backward by hand. He's catching a cold. He's miserable. He's mortified that somebody he knows might someday see him like this. He should be. Charles doesn't know it now, but despite promises to the contrary, he's not going to get paid for this. No, not even fed a free lunch...



TWISTED ISSUES: A splatter skate-punk classic.

"Um, it was a disappointing experience in some ways," is all Pinion will now say about his supporting role and assistant director duties on David R. Williams' execrable shot-on-video splatter anti-epic *Metal Noir*. Whatta understatement, eh? [See highly unfavorable review last ish, and he is not to be confused with me.—Ed.]

Pinion's own work, the prime example of which is *Twisted Issues*, has the same try-anything, patchwork homage-to-everybody quality that's so common to his young generation of

fellow no-budget do-it-yourselfers. And like them, Pinion is not unique in many of his influences and likes: Cronenberg, H.G. Lewis, pulp fiction, hardcore and other strains of post-punk musical mayhem, perhaps a little zen buddhism and drug abuse for good measure. Yes, your basic trash culture junkie. But the difference is that he's damn smart, and that makes his own work stand out from the jackal pack. A natural at processing and mutating all the usual crap to create something original, something visual-as budget allows—and intellectually arresting.

And he doesn't forget to make it funny. Not just goofus horror-fan hey-I-just-stepped-in-dogshit funny—Pinion's droll wit is as evident in his screenplays as in his conversation. Take one of the central conceits of *Twisted Issues*: an undead skaterpunk wearing a strainer on his face nails foot to board and goes galumphing around Gainesville, Florida, taking the viewer on a hallucinatory tour of that college burg's excuse for a youth culture while he seeks revenge on those fellow white trash brats who done him wrong. He

catches a couple bitchin' bands along the way, too. Murders a bass player or two.

Not exactly a flaccid attempt at warmed-over Barker or Romero, is it?

Pinion, who's rocked out in several post-hardcore bands and works at *Screw* magazine to pay his rent, understands punk attitudes and low-down sleazehoundism an infinite number of times better than whatever dealmaker's USC-bred son got to direct the last Jason installment.

We cornered Pinion in between a couple of the expensive long-distance phone calls he been making while trying to put together *Killbillies*, his entree into the world of emulsion rather than magnetic strip filmmaking.

How much of the Gainesville punk scene did you end up documenting in between the gore in Twisted Issues?

I'd say a pretty large chunk of it was in there. Just the period, say, summer of '86 through spring '87. Some bands were ignored—let's just call them the art school/jangle variety. It honestly came down to which bands I was hanging out with at the time. I pretty much sent out an open invitation to band for soundtrack contributions. Some came through, some didn't.

You seem to like giving your performers enough rope to nearly hang themselves with. What drugs were they on?

I tried to keep as professional a set as possible. If any of my actors were on drugs, it's news to me. I provided beer and cigarettes. Okay, pot showed up once in awhile. Okay, okay, we were mostly fucked up for much of the

"We were mostly fucked up for much of the shoot."



**Not me, of course.
Well, a couple
of scenes...**



...but I wouldn't recommend it; it can make for fuzzy focus if you're doing your own camera work."

shoot. Not me, of course. Well, a couple of scenes. The Mad Doctor's lab, for example. But I wouldn't recommend it; it can make for fuzzy focus if you're doing your own camera work.

Can there ever be such a thing as responsible drug use?

Of course not, what would be the point in that?

Is it really true that you were once a teacher, responsible for shaping young minds?

Yes, yes. I taught graphic arts—screenprinting, photography, and so on. The students that were like me in high school—studious, well-mannered—I found boring, so I immediately gravitated to the punk/hardcore contingent. The girls were cuter, too, with better haircuts.

Is it really true that you yourself used to be a punk rocker, responsible for damaging young ears?

I followed teaching with singing in the band *Psychic Violents* and playing bass with a handful of other bands. It was fun, and I found myself spending time with the cool people I used to teach. This included the cute girls.

Why isn't there more exploitive sex to balance out all the exploitative violence in Twisted Issues?

Balance? BALANCE?! You think a movie is a fucking yin/yang symbol or something??!! And didn't you find the spurting blood sexual? What are you, sick or something?

What's the worst reaction you've gotten to the tape, and the best?

Worst reaction was a NY-based 'zine that began its review with "I hate

movies shot on video." I knew I was in for a thrashing when I read that. The best reaction was probably the night it premiered in Gainesville. The place was packed, like for a show.

People standing back up in the wings. But of course they loved it—they either saw themselves or people they knew.

The 'zines have generally been really positive. I guess *ECCO* magazine gave me the most balanced. Some hardcore/skate zines have given reviews I can kindly call "mystified." They absolutely didn't get it. I think being sober can cloud your perceptions.

How does it feel to have become a hip New York-based underground filmmaker who goes to parties to hang out with Richard Kern and avoid (Name unprintable—Ed.)?

Well, of course it's been great. I just got my membership card in the mail.

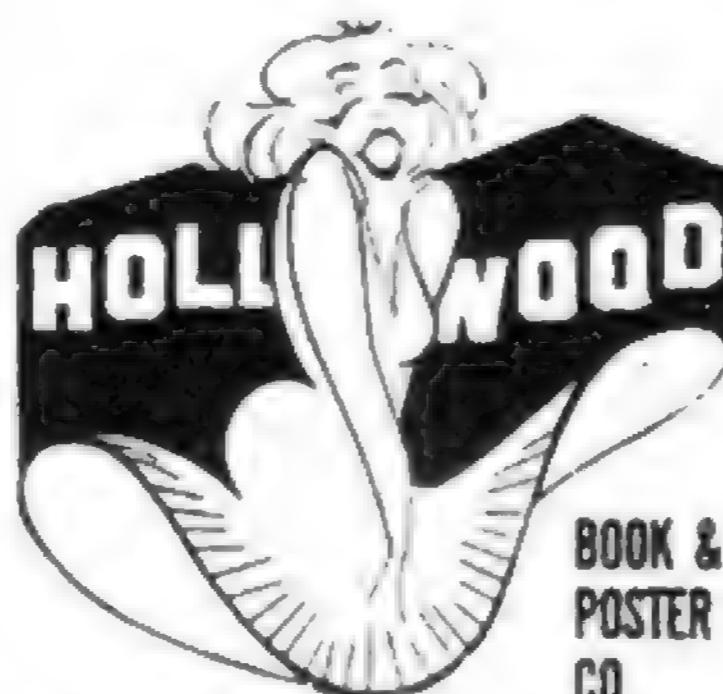
I've been to parties where one well-aimed Molotov cocktail would have wiped out the entire Cinema of Transgression. Last weekend, Alyce Wittenstein (Director of *No Such*

returned from the Amazon Basin, where he and Tommy Turner were doing benefit screenings of their films for the sake of the rain forests. Kern on the other hand, eschews politics, preferring to film voluptuous women shimmying in and out of tight clothing while seig heiling and wearing a ball gag.

I have you and Kern ever thought of joining forces and stealing the sleaze throne from the Dark Brothers?

Huh?

As mentioned, Pinion is currently scraping together money in order to begin production on the epic *Killbillies*. Interestingly, Charles again seems to buck the New York filmmaker stereotype by being unwilling to talk about the project. What ever happened to good, old fashioned, shameless, self-promotion? 



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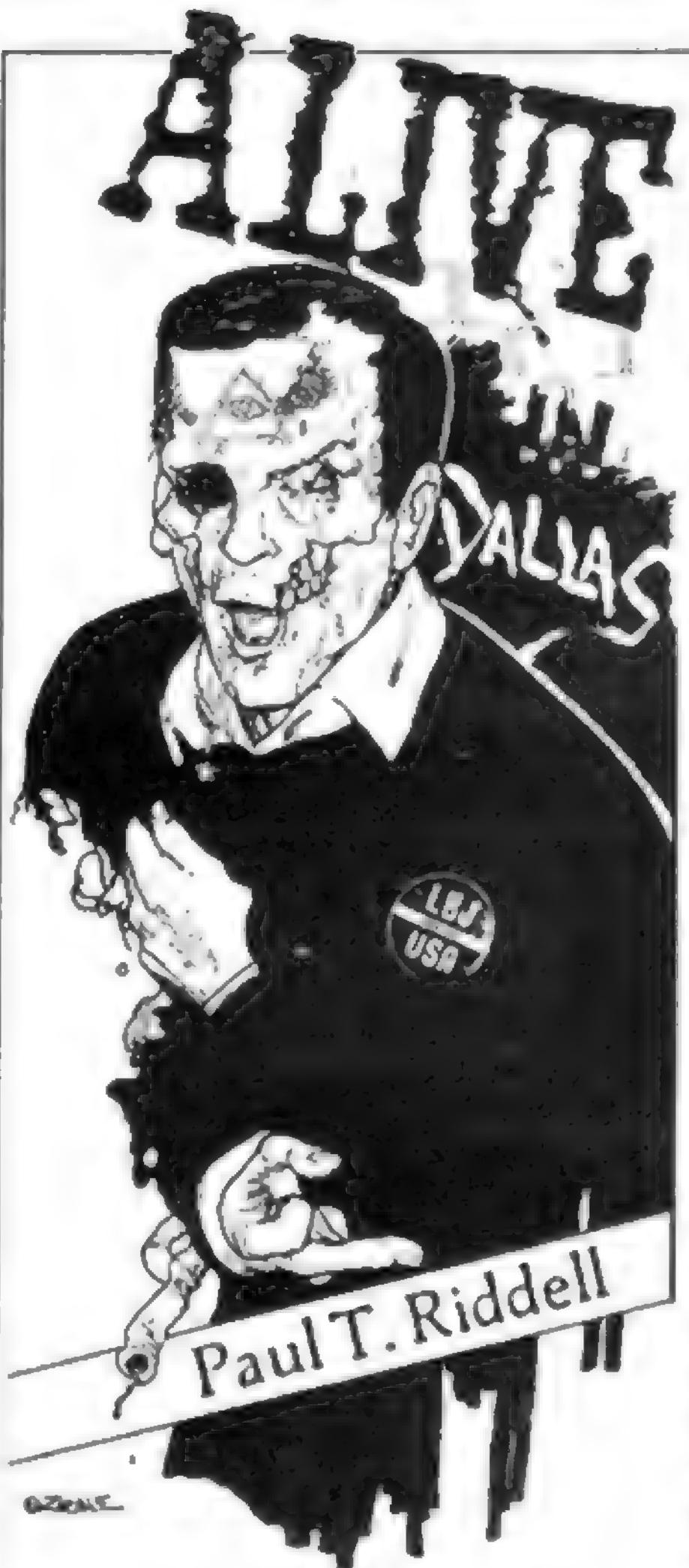
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Is GEORGE LUCAS THE L. RON HUBBARD OF THE 90s?

"Act like a dumbshit and they'll treat you as an equal."

-J.R. "Bob" Dobbs

IF ANYONE HAS EVER made serious money off of the words of Bob, that person would have to be George Lucas. Nearly fifteen years ago, he plagiarized nearly sixty years of science fiction to produce *Star Wars*, thirty years of serial adventures to cough up *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, and six years of test marketing and toy development for *Return of the Jedi*. Instead of getting hordes of angry film fans burning Stars of David on his front

lawn, he gets acclaimed as a creative genius. Moguls and *Star Trek* fans piss themselves every time he announces that he's ready to start filming the next installment of the *Star Wars* series, although he and Lucasfilm, Limited have announced that little gem nearly every year since 1984. Back then, Steven Spielberg was set to direct, and Lucasfilm estimated a release in 1986.

However, Uncle George didn't want to do the first installment of the *Journal of the Whills* series, *The Clone Wars*, just yet. Shortly after each of these announcements, ol' George went on to bring us a film that the studio guaranteed "was even better than *Star Wars*!"

And so we got *Howard the Duck*. And *Labyrinth*. And *Willow*. And *Tucker*. And with each multi-megaton crater in the cinema landscape, George lost a little more money, until Lucasfilm was nearly bankrupt (only one division, Industrial Light and Magic, remains solvent, due to the contracts for FX for an ungodly number of recent films, as well as the work on *Star Trek: The Next Generation*), the *Star Wars* Fan Club was out of members (a later attempt to consolidate it into a George Lucas Fan Club failed mightily), and Lucas found that he couldn't produce a film without supervision because of his penchant for cost overruns (or is there another reason he had a co-producer on *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*?). Truly, it seemed as if the reign of the man who brought "Entertainment back to the movies!!!" as *Time* put it, was over.

In recent weeks, the fans haven't been disappointed. About one month ago, as I write this, Bantam Spectra released *Star Wars: Heir to the Empire* by Timothy Zahn, which quickly hit the top of the New York Times bestseller list, and has gone into a second printing in that time...in hardcover! Set some five years after the events in *Jedi*, it promises to be the first of a three-part series in the lives of Luke Skywalker and friends.

First, the quick review—Timothy Zahn is a damn good writer. Having him writing this is akin to trying to use high-quality epoxy to polish a turd: the outside is bright and shiny, but you can't help but notice that something's rotting underneath. At the very least, the characters are better written and motivated than they ever were in the films.

The real problem, though, is what this portends for the future. Lucas has tried to keep his name in the public eye, if ever he were to produce another *Star Wars* film: the animated *Droids* and *Ewoks* series and the constant *Ewoks* specials on ABC are prime examples of this, and the fact that they lost out in the ratings should make us all thankful for *Muppet Babies* and *Pee-wee Herman*, bless his unclothed penis. Therefore, now he's having to go the route of L. Ron Hubbard, the founder of Scientology. Hubbard built his Scientology empire on fans of his science fiction work, and when they started defecting in the late 70s, he realized that he had to get his name in print again, so up chucked *Battlefield Earth* and the *Mission: Earth* series, and with the now deceased Hubbard's name in print again, the Church of Scientology could use it to promote their rather skewed religion.

Now, I'm not saying that Lucas is trying to start a religion; *Star Wars* is already a relic and needs no such adoration on its own. But is Lucas trying this to get the financing for another adventure for Luke Skywalker, or is he pulling the old bait-and-switch he did with *Willow* and *Howard the Duck*?

You tell me. I only work here.

-Paul Riddell is a writer living in Dallas who hates being referred to as a sci-fi nerd.

Comments or death threats may be sent to: Paul Riddell, PO Box 811852, Dallas, Texas 75381.

SHAMELESS PLUG!

Without making excuses or looking for cover, here's an exclusive preview look at director Guy Bodart's upcoming film, THE ANTI-CHRIST.

By Rowdy Yates

A POLOGIZING FOR
His somewhat halting English, Belgium-born, Las Vegas-based director Guy Bodart comes across as a serious filmmaker wholly devoted to celluloid.

"People just have to understand that videotape is not for filmmaking," Bodart explains, "It's good for the television news because it's fast and easy, but that's all. It's so ugly, you know? I've shot in 16mm, but I think Super 8 is the best for filmmakers who produce films for video release. The high quality of Beaulieu Super 8 cameras, a good Schneider lens and Kodachrome 40 stock are really unbelievable, and with a Rank Cintel transfer to video—you really can't see a difference between Super 8 and 16mm. This year at Cannes I even saw a Super 8 blow-up to 35mm with terrific results. Video can't compare."

As the tirade continues, Bodart's real feelings become clear when talking about his love for film stock as opposed to magnetic tape: "And it won't last. If you shot a feature on video, after 10 or 15 years, your master will deteriorate to the point that is it unservicable for professional use, unlike movie film that you can keep for more than 50 or 60 years without color loss."



But the real issue is—will audiences 50 years from now want to see Bodart's films?

Judging from selected scenes of his latest feature effort, *The Anti-Christ*, it's a distinct possibility. A shocker that owes more to the European/Hammer tradition than the American-bred slasher pic, the film, currently in post-production, employs the demonic *a la Rosemary's Baby* and *The Omen* to inspire gooseflesh

as opposed to messy gore that simply nauseates.

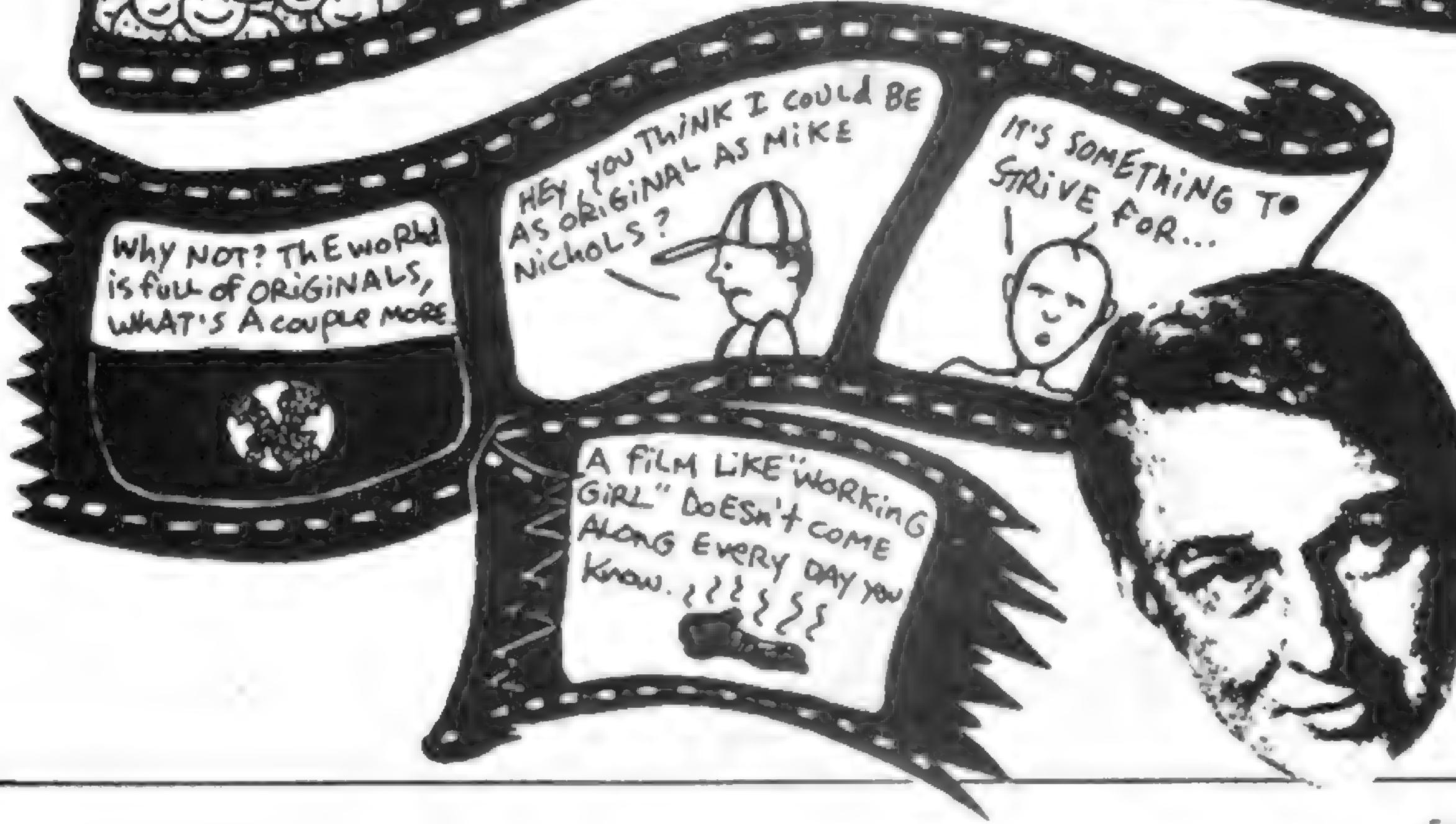
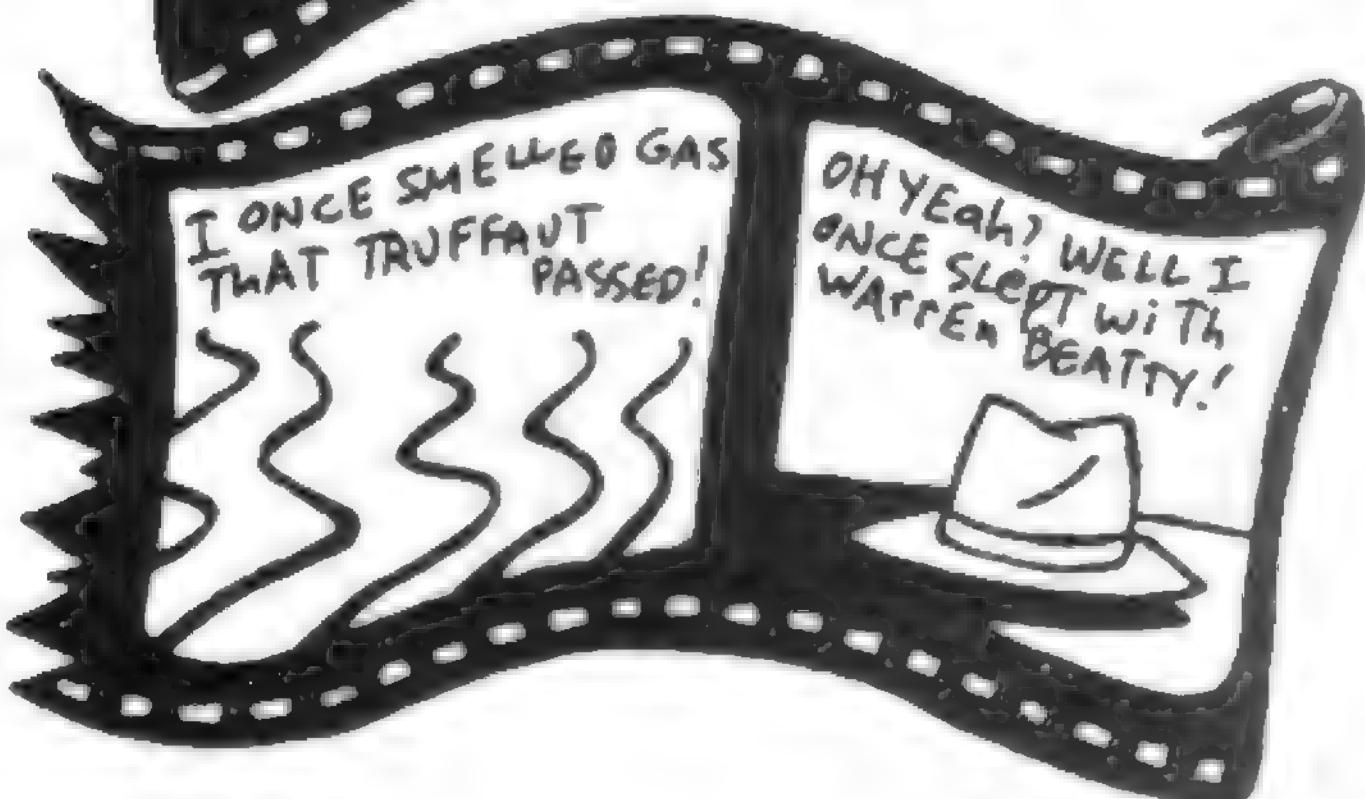
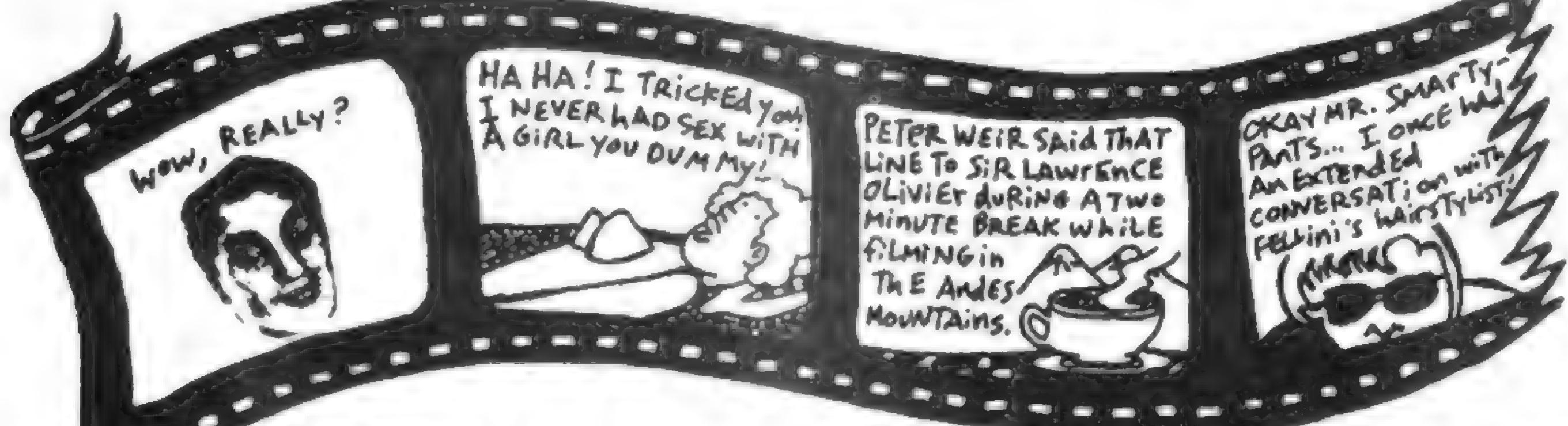
"I don't care much for those films, the serial killer stories. But I suppose that's because I grew up with tales of classical monsters and witches in my country. I just don't get scared by a man with a big knife killing people."

Supposedly based on a true story, the film stars the voluptuous Lorelei Lanford, a dangerous-looking blonde with a Traci Lords-esque pout and no obvious aversion to disfiguring special effects make-up. The possession/exorcism scenes, similar in execution and intensity to William

Friedkin's unforgettably jitter-inspiring classic, *The Exorcist*, finds Lanford convincingly convulsing and contorting with the best of them. Exclaims Bodart, who met Lanford at the Cannes Film Festival last year, "Lorelei has a real movie star look, it's almost a shame that we had to cover her up!"

We would have to agree. **FTV**





"THE MAKING OF A SLASHER FILM"

by PHIL COHEN or COHEN INC
(as told to and interpreted)
by J. DEAGNON ESQ © 1990

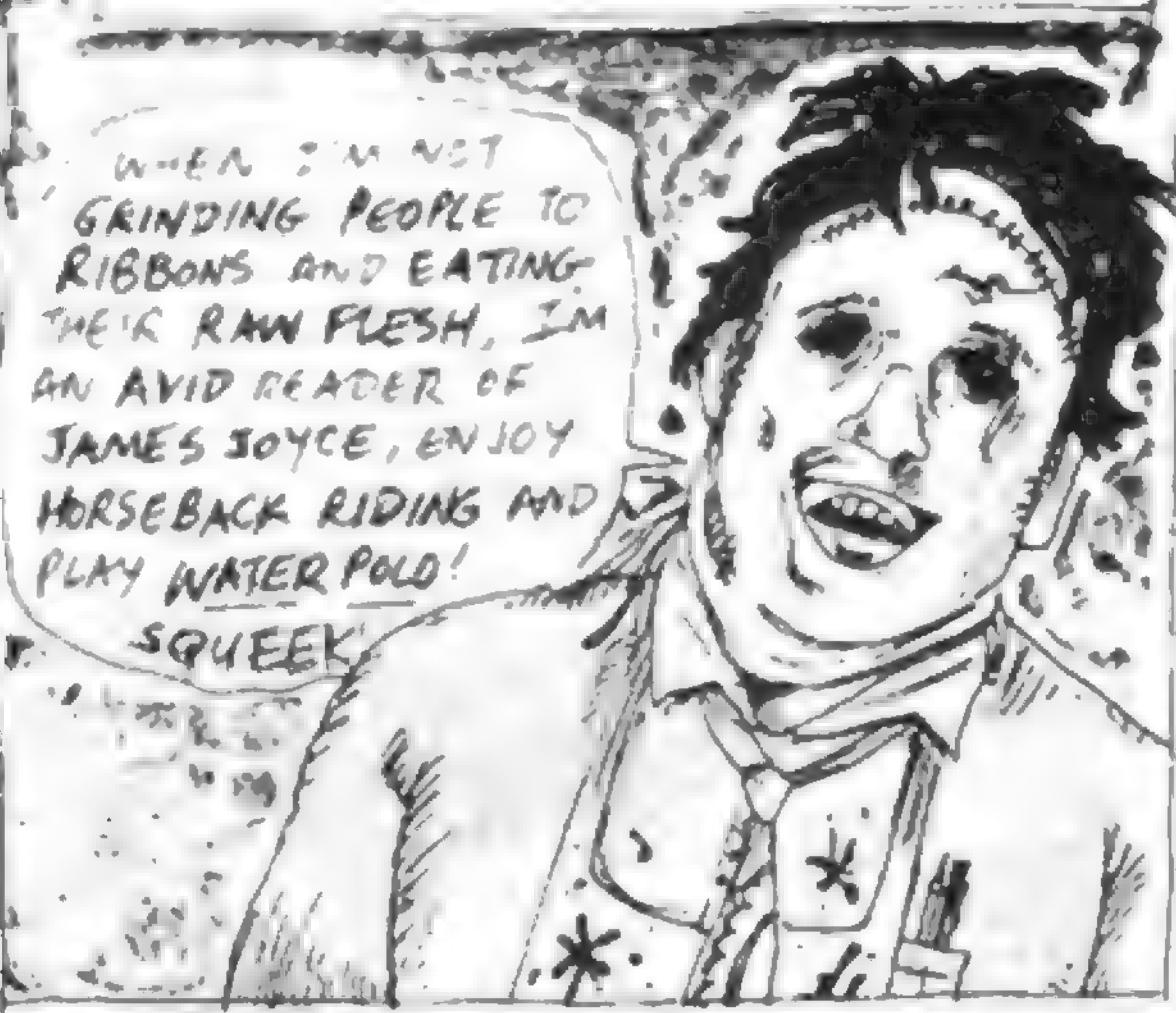
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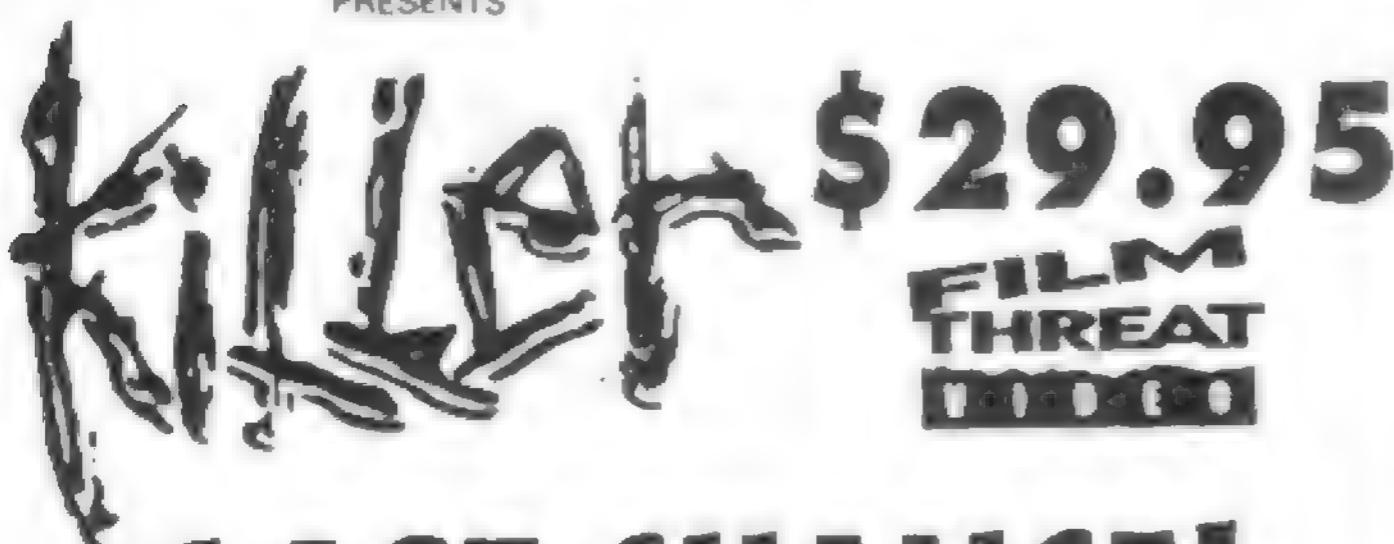


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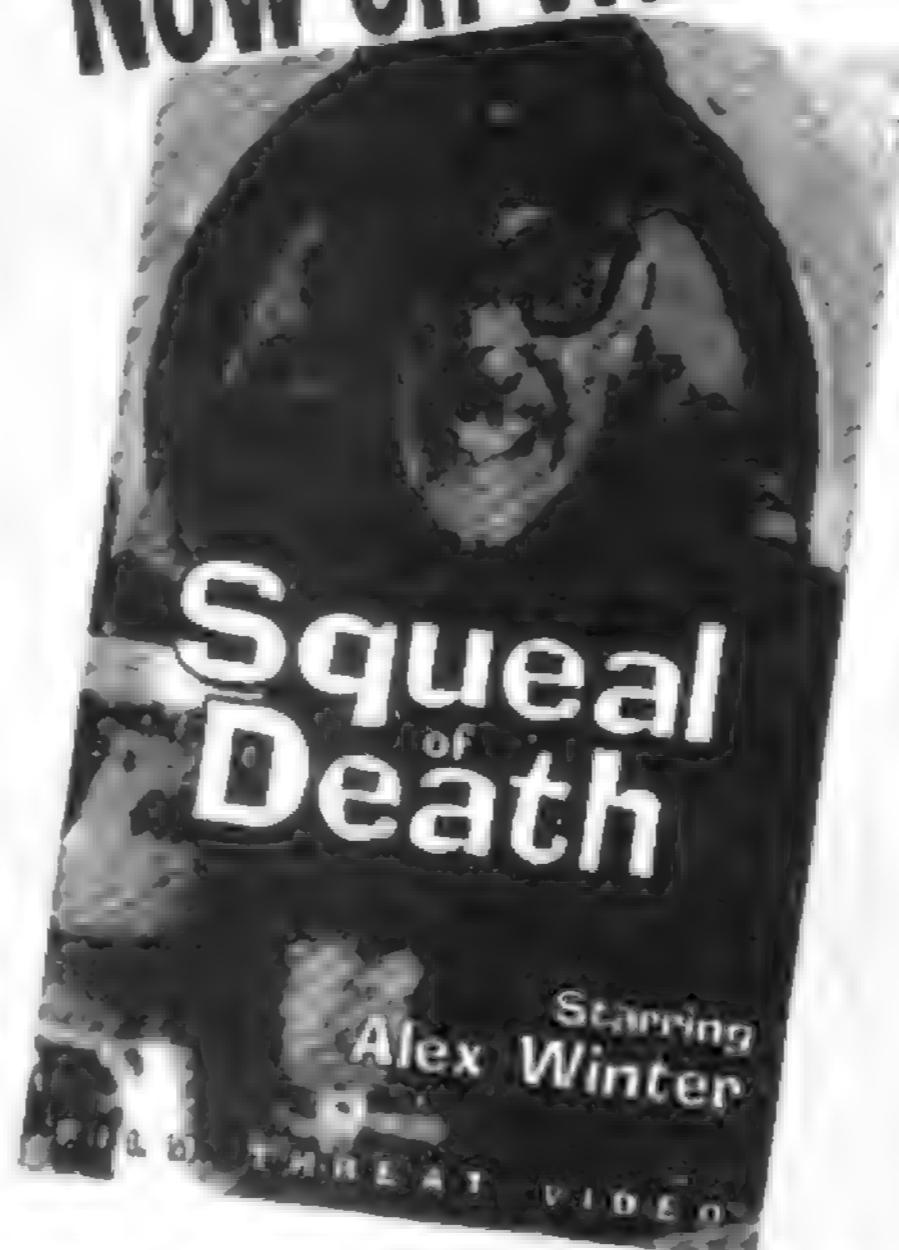
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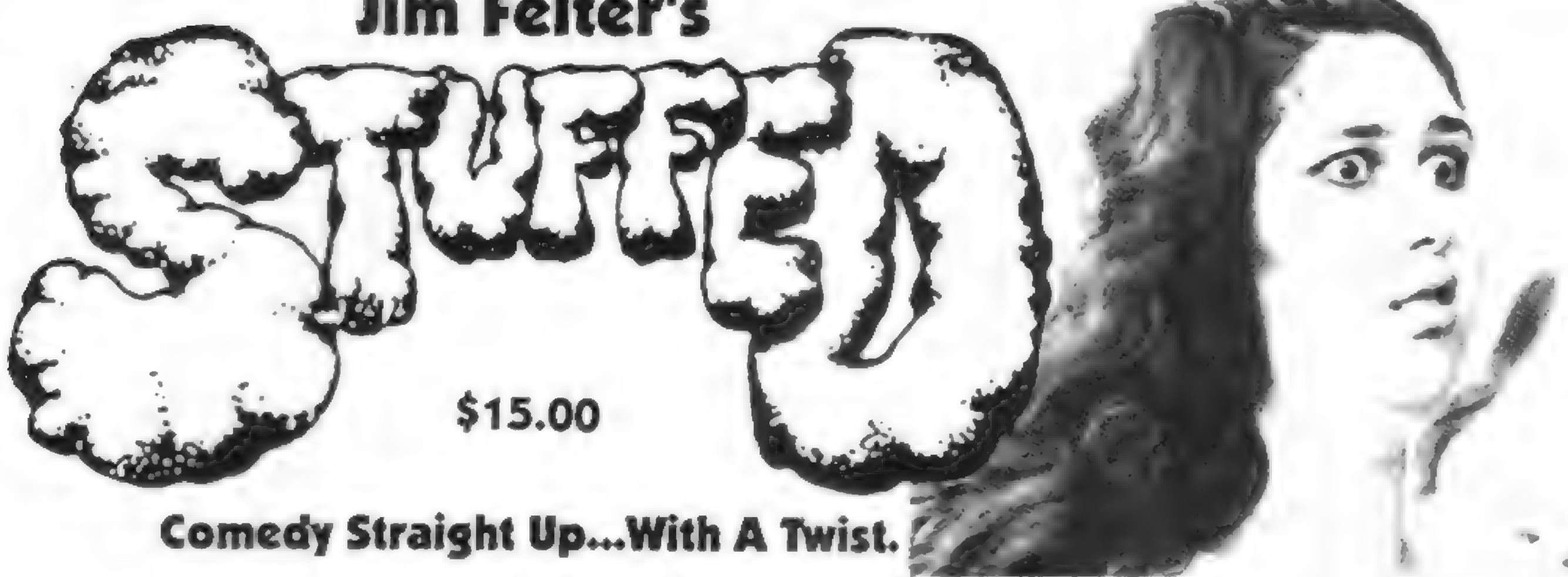
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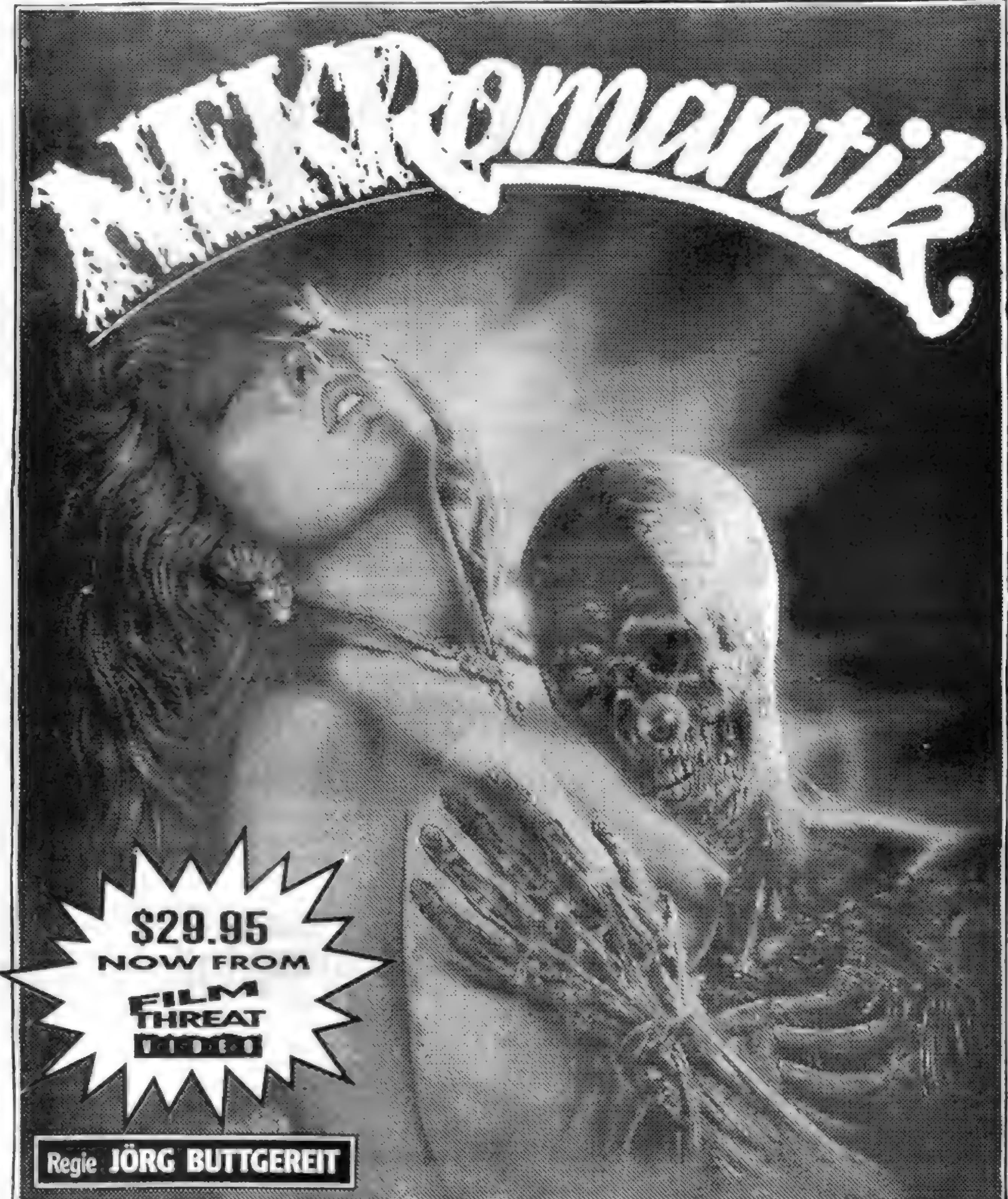
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WORLDWIDE MAGAZINE St. Louis' most loved and hated public access cable TV show (see review this issue) for tape trade or purchase info, write to: Peter Parisi, PO Box 39333, St. Louis, MO 63139 or call (314) 879-3002

TRAUMA TV, is on its 4th year broadcasting Alternative, Experimental and Avant-Garde work by Independent Film/Video makers. TRAUMA airs Thurs nights from 5-6 PM on CH. 25 to SF audience of over 300,000. Submissions for TRAUMA TV must be no longer than 50 min. or be subject to edit. Send 1/2" or 3/4" video to: TRAUMA TV, PO Box 42405, S.F., CA 94142

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BANG! #22 is available with: Sam Raimi, Roger Corman, Angelyne, Dana Gillespie, 360's, Manitoba's Wild Kingdom, Mojo Nixon and SEX. This issue is dedicated to Winona Ryder. Send \$1 & two 29¢ stamps per copy to: BANG! 77 Newbern Ave., Medford, MA 02155-6430

ACTORS/ACTRESSES needed for weird, no-budget horror film shot in San Francisco bay area. If you're an exotic, exhibitionist type willing to go the distance, please send resume, photo or reel to: BIG BANG PRODUCTIONS, 110 Pacific Ave. Suite 306, San Francisco, CA 94111

PHONE PRANK TAPES Will trade with others interested in Phone Prank audio tapes. If you've heard of RED-The Tube Bar, New Saigon and others-LET'S TRADE! Listen You Motherfucker, I don't want money, I just want the most demented audio ever! Send me yours and I'll send you mine. Chris Gore c/o FTVG, PO Box 3170, LA, CA 90078-3170

E V E N T S

FREE listings for **FESTIVALS** and **EVENTS**. Send a release exactly as you want it printed-50 words max. Send to: FTVG EVENTS LISTINGS, PO Box 3170, Los Angeles, CA 90078-3170 USA

FAIR VISION RATIO is seeking submissions. Send tapes in 3/4", VHS, or Super 8, 16mm film with SASE to: Fair Vision Ratio, 911, 117 Yale Avenue North, Seattle, WA 98109. Contact Alan Pruzan at (206) 682-6552

THE 8TH ANNUAL OLYMPIA FILM FESTIVAL CINE-X is soliciting submissions of new regional independent film and video shorts to be presented at the 1991 Olympia Festival, November 8-17. 1 of 2 categories, Documentary or Non-Documentary, 3/4", 1/2", Super 8, 16, 35. Send entries to: Art In Media, PO Box 2827, Olympia, WA 98507 with SASE, a brief description and telephone #. Deadline: Oct. 1, 1991. Contact Bob Basanich: OFS, 218 1/2 W. 4th St. Suite B, Olympia, WA 98501 (206) 754-6670

VICTORIAN INTERNATIONAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL An open eligibility, general subject competition. Formats: Super 8, Regular 8, or 16mm. Send entries to: 18 Moore St. East Brighton 3187, Victoria, Australia. No fee. Deadline: October 10, 1991. Contact: Mr. Les Barnes

LOS ANGELES INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION CELEBRATION Offers \$150,000 in cash, prizes and awards for animated films. ANY format. Entry fee-\$15. Terry Thoren at Expanded Entertainment, 2222 So. Barrington Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90064 (213) 473-6701 or 444-9850-FAX Deadline: October

I N T E R N S H I P S

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT FOR FILM THREAT VIDEO GUIDE, must not mind doing menial tasks, errands, going to movies for FREE, or big Hollywood parties. Must live in Los Angeles area. Send writing samples, short films, and the typically heavily-embellished resume. Contact: Dave Williams c/o FTVG

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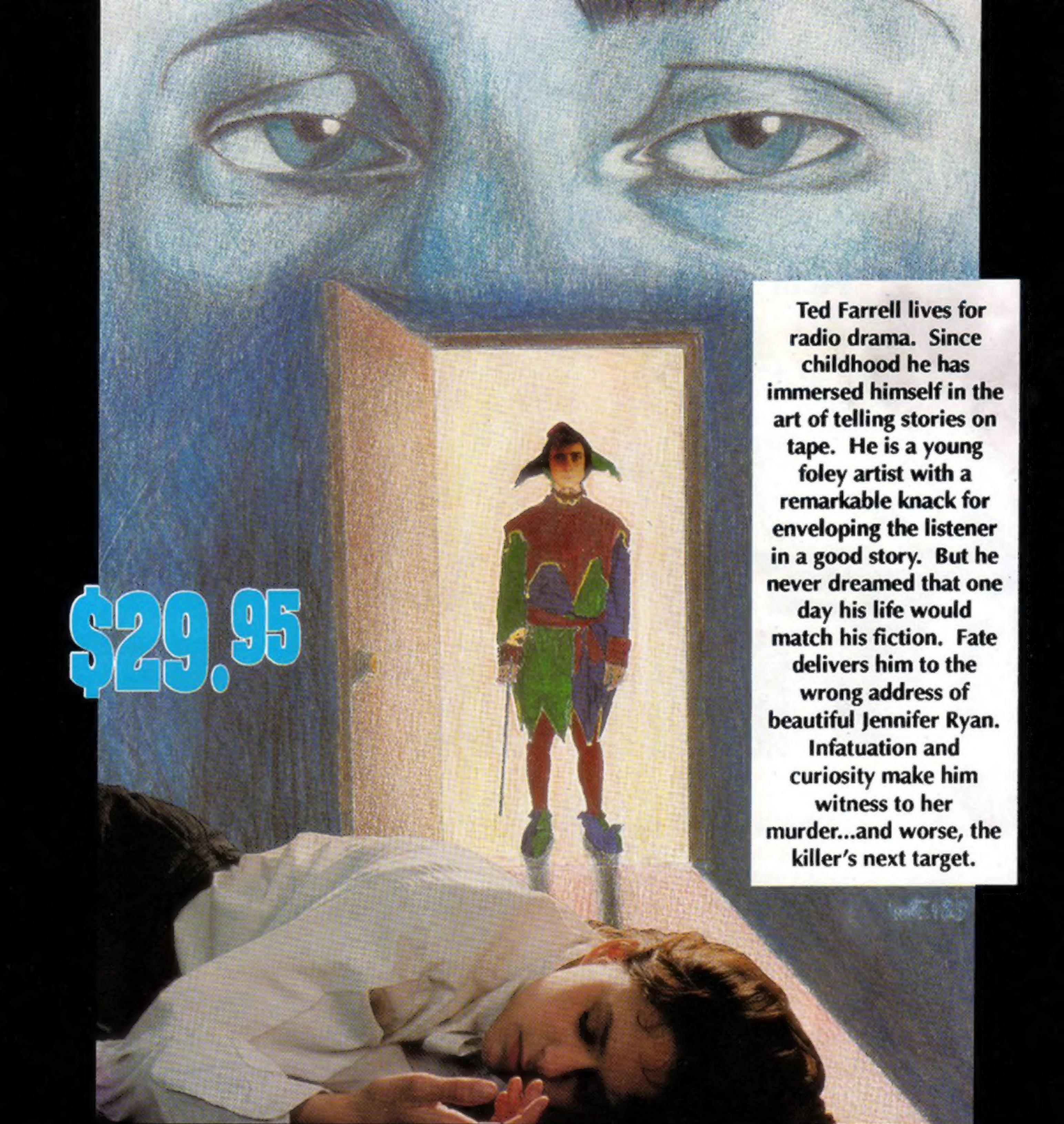
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